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The power of the *Genitrix* - Gender, legitimacy and lineage: Emma of Normandy, Urraca of León-Castile and Teresa of Portugal

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Resumo

Durante a Idade Média, o papel e poder da mulher como rainha não é só ambíguo e limitado mas também em permanente fluxo de transformação. Para rainhas do século XI e XII, como Emma da Normandia (Emma Ælgifu), Urraca de Leão e Castela e Teresa de Portugal, a afirmação do seu *status*, tanto real como social, dependia, não só da sua identidade como indivíduo consagrado e detentor de um cargo, mas também do ofício desempenhado ao lado do elemento masculino. Os mecanismos regentes visavam, em última instância, uma partilha de poder e, porém, os percursos de vida de Emma, Urraca e Teresa e as acções tomadas pelas mesmas afirmaram-nas como autoridades individuais, gerando conflito com o entendimento intelectual e governativo na época, de maioria (se não inteiramente) masculina.

Dificuldades de análise e a multiplicidade de papéis e facetas das rainhas da Idade Média tornam necessárias abordagens inovadoras para decorrer sobre esta discussão sobre poderes e títulos. Os estudos de género oferecem possibilidade para construir pontes de diálogo entre culturas, espaços e tempos. As três personagens referidas são precisamente exemplo desta interação. Foram três mulheres, filhas, mães, esposas e rainhas que colocaram modelos e realidades em debate, compelindo a mudanças e/ou adaptações nas regras impostas ao seu género pelos cargos e papéis desempenhados.

A fim de melhor compreender o poder destas mulheres e a sua importância para a história e para o género, propomo-nos analisar e contextualizar as várias identidades que se agruparam no título de cada uma das rainhas - *domina*, *mater regis*, *regina*, *conlaterana regis*, *imperatrix* - com o objectivo de as enquadrar num espaço de diálogo e interdisciplinaridade entre o mundo Anglo-Saxónico e o Ibérico. Pretende-se igualmente compreender a relação que estabeleceram com os seus filhos como suas *genitrix*, por modo a verificar qual o contributo e reconhecimento inegável que tiveram na transmissão e legitimação de poderes de gerações futuras.

Palavras-chave: género; linhagem; legitimação; *regina*; *genitrix*

Abstract

During the middle Ages, the role and powers of women as queens suggested not only ambiguity and limitation, but also a permanent flux of transformations. For queens of the eleventh and twelfth-century like Emma of Normandy (Emma Ælgifu), Urraca of Leon-Castile and Teresa of Portugal, the confirmation of their *status*, both royal and social, relied not only on their identity as consecrated individuals and owners of an office, but it also depended on how that office was carried out beside its masculine counterpart. The current mechanisms were designed ultimately for a share in power, and yet the life paths of Emma, Urraca and Teresa and the actions they took confirmed them as individual authorities, generating a conflict with the intellectual and government understanding of their time, in its majority (if not entirely) masculine.

Difficulties of analysis and the multiplicity of roles and faces of middle ages' queens call out for creative approaches especially in discussions concerning powers and titles. Gender studies offer the possibility to build communicational bridges between culture, time and space. These three characters in this study are examples of this interaction. They were three women, daughters, mothers, wives and queens, that forced models and realities into debate, and called out for changes and /or adaptations to rules imposed to their gender by their performed offices and roles.

Aiming for a better understanding of the power of these women and its importance to history and to gender, we propose to analyze and contextualize their lives and the various identities that were gathered in the title of each one of the queens – *domina*, *mater regis*, *regina*, *conlaterana regis*, *imperatrix* –with the intend to create a space where dialogue and interdisciplinarity between the Anglo-Saxon world and the Iberian can converge. Furthermore, it is our purpose to understand the relationship they established with their sons as their *genitrix*, and thus verify their part in the transmission of powers and legitimacy to future generations.

Keywords: gender; lineage; *legitimacy*; *regina*; *genitrix*

Abbreviations

ASC – *Anglo Saxon Chronicle*, 1954, translation and brief introduction by G.N Garmonsway, London, Anon, 2nd edition.

CAS – *Las Crónicas Anónimas de Sahagún*, 1920, D. Julio Puyol y Alonso, Real Academia de Historia, Madrid.

HC – *Historia Compostelana*, 1994, edited by Emma Falque Rey, Madrid, Ediciones Akal.

DMP - *Documentos medievais Portugueses – Documentos régios*, 1958, edited by Azevedo, Ruy and Avelino Jesus da Costa, Vol.I, Lisboa.

Other abbreviations - Versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

MS A – Manuscript A – A Cottonian Fragment: British Museum, Cotton MS, Otho B xi, 2.

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|-------------|---|-------------------------|---|---|
| <i>MS B</i> | } | The Abingdon Chronicles | { | British Museum, Cotton MS. Tiberius A vi. |
| <i>MS C</i> | | | | British Museum, Cotton MS. Tiberius B i. |

MS D – The Worcester Chronicle: British Museum, Cotton MS. Tiberius B iv.

MS E – The Laud Peterborough Chronicle: Bodleian MS. Laud 636.

MS F – The Bilingual Canterbury Epitome: British Museum, Cotton MS. Domitian A viii. Entries in English (F) and in Latin (F Lat)

Introduction

The study of sex and gender as grammatical categories precedes its revision as historical categories. This analysis ultimately culminates into a concrete and practical application of the concepts as more literal and serious structures used to designate a certain form of social organization and inter-relations. Transposing concepts from one domain to another, a common trait in humanities, is beset with problems and not exempt from human invention and imagination. Judith Butler argues that all forms of identity and identification are based on and linked to the procedures, processes, techniques and structures of subjectivity. Identity is, in other words, always derived from, dependent on, and only explicable in terms of a prior politics of subjectivity. This “butlerian perspective” is in itself derived from Foucault’s observation that subjection is paradoxical. We observe subjection as the power to induce subordination to the subject rather than understanding that this power helps forming the subject as well. Power, which appears external, also imposes itself on us and we internalize and accept its terms, because we think *a priori* that those terms are fundamental to “our” existence. Therefore we categorize, we project, and our psyche helps the re-emerge of this external power as a form that constitutes our self-identity.¹

The subordination of the subject comes through language, and it is at once formed and subordinated because “no subject emerges without an attachment to those on whom he or she is fundamentally dependent”.² Therefore, Butler suggests that in order to have, to claim, to gain, or to be assigned with an identity, and thus, become part of the so-called society, one must be recognizable and explainable within a grid of

¹ See BUTLER (1997), Judith, “Against Proper Objects”, *Feminism Meets Queer Theory*, Elizabeth Weed and Naomi Schor (ed.), Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1997, pp.1-30

² BUTLER (1997), p.7

intelligibility that make subjects appear. Gender, for Butler, inserts in this grid. In truth, we perceive the world linguistically: everything to which we have a word for we can agree or disagree; when we do not have, it is considered to be outside of our realm of experience. Everyone who proposes to codify the meaning of words wages a lost battle, because words, like the ideas and the things they mean, have a story. Sex and gender do not figure outside of these same boundaries.

In a simplistic way, sex is something empirical, factual, whereas gender is said to be a social construction. In other words, sex was used to address the biological and anatomical differences between men and women, and gender was applied to the social constructed notions of masculinity and femininity.³ But if we remember the categories in which sex thrives, - that is, genetics, physiology, reproductive system, to name a few – these same categories, which are said to be independent of our perception, end up being themselves cultural *constructus*, because Science is a form of producing knowledge and, therefore, a cultural activity as well. Consequently, when we seek to classify and categorize, we are already creating a linguistic layer, a cultural layer, underneath our discourse.

In fact, gender became attached to the body. The sex of a person is normally something obvious to us all and, whether we are conscious of it or not, sometimes it alters the way we interact. We can refer to someone as “he” or “she”, choosing or avoiding certain symbols, metaphors and concepts which we think are accurate to each sex, depending if it is a man or a woman. Language counteracts action. Knowing the sex is important to the individual, because from it one organizes the discourse. Society not only configures the personality and behaviour but also the physical appearance. And

³ Sex was opposed to gender for the first time in STOLLER (1968) Richard, *Sex and Gender: The Development of Masculinity and Femininity*, London, Kardac Books, pp 9-12. Available online at <<https://books.google.pt>>

if the body itself becomes perceived through social interpretation, then sex should not be distinct from gender, rather something which can be included in it.⁴

Gender as a subjective identity, as a significant system, is a process of differentiation and distinction demanding the suppression of ambiguities and elements of opposition as a way to ensure (or at least to create the illusion of) coherence and mutual compression. Gender identity is generally associated to sexual identity because as soon as a person is born it is inserted into what Butler calls the “grid of cultural intelligibility”, which already has available the “woman” and “men” categories only, echoing an heterosexual matrix through which social order makes sense of the ideal relations between sex, gender and also desire.

Gender is said to follow naturally from sex and desire to follow from gender, but both are seen as aspects of sex.⁵ The boundaries through which we can navigate inside the grid are part of a specific framework of meaning: femininity requires femaleness, and is expressed in sexual desire for a man; the same happens with masculinity, which it is expressed in sexual desire for a woman and entails maleness. These said relations of continuity and coherence are part of strict gender norms, and cultural intelligible subjects are those in who sex, gender and desire flow in the “proper” way. As we reach near the grid lines that enclose each intelligible gender, subjects lose validation and legitimacy. If they follow the line up in a different way, they are regarded as culturally unintelligible, not viable and unnatural.⁶

Joan Scott infers that it is extremely difficult to detach oneself from the Lacan theory: it is through language that gender identities are constructed. More specifically,

⁴ See NICHOLSON (2003), Linda, “Capítulo 2: La interpretación del concepto de género”, *Del sexo al género. Los equívocos de un concepto*, edited by Silvia Tubert, Valencia, Ed.Cátedra, pp.47-81.

⁵ LLOYD (2007), Moya, “Cultural Intelligibility – Contesting Heteronormativity”, *Judith Butler: From Norms to Politics*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

⁶ LLOYD (2007)

they are in their essence a social construction. But because society is never static and coherent, any categorization is also highly unstable. Therefore, as subjects progressively navigate or are seen as being “out of the grid”, the capacity to make ourselves understood or communicate with each other changes as well.

If to be human is to be heterosexual, the so-called non-normative sexual minorities (lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, for instance) are less-than-human. Masculinity emerges through repression (of feminine characteristics), not through some predetermined biological connection. Thus, there is always conflict and competing meanings of sexuality. As a consequence, the very concept of "man" and "woman" becomes problematic because their precepts, masculinity and femininity, are thrown into disarray. One should try to do a continuous process of auto criticism to one's own vocabulary and seek ways to deconstruct such hierarchical and dogmatic productions, instead of taking them as unique and intrinsic.⁷

Regardless, Butler had already expressed her ideas on this natural instability. The process of constructing a subject's identity is neither linear nor cemented. In Butler's perspective, gender is an act (or the result of a repetition of a series of acts) which is constantly and inevitably happening, because it is impossible to exist as a social being outside gender. The actor, she calls it, has to dramatize its identity at a metaphorical level of its own choice.⁸ Gender identification constitutes a basic identification which establishes, in a certain way, a tripartite formula – the “being”, that is to say, the “I”, or a part of what one is; the social “I”, better said, what society (and consequently, another “I”) hopes one to be, and the becoming, that which one can become to be. It is a process which has no beginning and no end; it is something we “do”

⁷ SCOTT (1986), Joan, “Gender, a useful category of historical analysis”, *American Historical Review*, n° 91, [s.l.], pp.1064-1065. Available online at <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1864376>>

⁸ BUTLER (1990), Judith, *Thinking Gender: Gender Trouble – Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, edited by Linda L.Nicholson, Routledge, Chapman & Hall Inc., New York, London, pp. 6-7.

more than what we “are”. However, although Butler’s theory offers a very enticing vision of a world where new categories are formed to include new realities or eradicate former ones, I must agree with Scott’s formulation: we are still far from refusing the traditional and permanent binary opposition regarding sexual difference, where the binomial masculine/feminine is still viewed as the only possible relation and permanent aspect of human condition. The same polarization is applied to man/woman.⁹

Ultimately, sex and gender diverge in terms of the body. Sex is understood to be the invariant aspects of the body and gender the cultural meaning and form the body acquires. But Nicholson alerts to the problems of such intransigent assertion because “we cannot think that, regarding the distinction male/female, the body is constructed equally in all societies”, and one should remember that if the distinction is constantly applied, we are relegating phenomena related mostly to gender. In other words, we create a discourse where dualism gives no space to “the existing differences in our way of thinking, how we act and feel” nor to “the distinct cultural ideas of the body and what it means to the man and to the woman”.¹⁰

Gender, in Butler’s vision, is unnatural, and the presumption of a casual or a relational connection between sex and gender is undermined, since “it is no longer possible to attribute the values or social functions of women to biological necessity”.¹¹ If being a woman has no longer the values and social functions of being female, only a cultural interpretation of being female, then the female body becomes the vessel of the gender “woman” and it becomes unreasonable for that body to harbour other constructions of gender. If one is female, there is a self and fixed relation of anatomical

⁹ SCOTT (1986)

¹⁰ See NICHOLSON (2003), p.53

¹¹ See BUTLER (1986), Judith, “Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex*”. *Yale French Studies*, n°72, pp.35–49 (p.35). Available online at <<http://doi.org/10.2307/2930225>>

facts which makes one female and not some other sex.¹² Claiming to be a woman lacks this mental construction we created in which sex offers a simple identity.

Simone de Beauvoir's famous formulation, "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman", goes towards the idea that gender is an aspect of identity that is gradually acquired. It is not only a cultural construction imposed upon identity, but also a process of constructing ourselves. Beauvoir's affirmation states that even with social imposed cultural construction, ultimately one chooses one's gender. She advocates freedom and points out a path for self-discovery. But the terror of leaving a prescribed gender is too much of a burden. People feel deeply wounded if they are told they are not manly or womanly enough, as they feel anguished when trespassing upon another gender territory. At its limit, Beauvoir's claim does not stop alienation of some sort, because a woman playing to be a man will only get her frustrated and perhaps ridiculed, and to be a woman will be subjected to social sanctions and feminine enslavement to the body (e.g. motherhood). In truth, Simone de Beauvoir urges both men and women to find a language of "transcendence", where they need to identify with their "consciousness" rather than with their anatomy, where sex is not really his or her sex but beyond sex; the body becomes the Other, insofar as we believe that the "I" is not the body we inhabit but a soul or consciousness.

This leads us to a paradox. Disembodiment is deceiving because we cannot deny the body, a material reality which has already been located and defined within the social context(s). Yet again, language counteracts action. Therefore, Simone de Beauvoir proposes to envision the body as a cultural situation, not a limited or a natural "sex" but one field which is full of interpretive possibilities. If the body is a "situation", then gender can become a way of "existing" one's body, and a true cultural affair. If the sex

¹² However, one should not forget that even this presumption is counteracted by the chromosomal variations.

is less restrained by anatomy, then it does not pose limits to the possibilities of gender because gender is no longer dictated by anatomy.¹³ Feminist theories clanged to these concepts because it allowed them to discredit the claim that anatomy is destiny, and thus liberate women from patriarchal oppression. Truthfully, gender history was first designed as a sort of emancipation of women's history. In the majority of cases, women were used as the sole subjects of analysis, and the word "gender" became a substitute for "women".

Overall, even with all of its contradictions and susceptibilities, how can we theorize gender and make it a useful category of historical analysis? It was actually Joan Scott in her essay "Gender, a useful category of historical analysis", written during the eighties, who elaborated a double concept for gender, one where it signified relations of power and not only a social construction of sexual difference. Rather than putting women as victims of oppression and men as attackers, it searched for the social, historical and cultural context, for such relations, interceding gender with class, race, group, age, and so on.¹⁴

I am not going to make the history of the concept of gender applied to the medieval society, not because it is not relevant to the subject of this thesis, not even because I am eluding myself from the task, but for the reason that it has been already done so, and quite precise and thoughtfully, in its several cultural and social dimensions¹⁵. It matters however to reaffirm that medieval societies accepted the existence of two sexes – masculine and feminine – and admitted the reality of a third gender.¹⁶ Moreover, the insistency in separating sexual identity from gender and

¹³ See BUTLER (1986)

¹⁴ SCOTT (1986).

¹⁵ See RODRIGUES (2012), Ana Maria S.A., "La Identidad de Género en La Edad Media: Una Cuestión Polémica", *Identitats (XIV Curs d'Estiu de Balaguer)*, edited by Flocel Sabaté, Lleida, Pagés, pp. 43-57.

¹⁶ RODRIGUES (2012), p.46.

pressing on the social construction of gender identity has almost left no space for the subject as an individual. Nevertheless, what we have been observing lately is that there are limits for what society can impose, and even a defined and interiorized structure as sexuality is not immune to changes.

Gender studies open a gateway to new interpretations. Even models that are deemed to be unbending are sometimes forced to be put into question in order to convey what are considered to be abnormalities within a pre-establish and closed reality, under the guise of internalized norms which operate as a regularized power. The construction of gender is, as referred, fluid. Therefore, it can be used to formulate hypothesis concerning past events and people. Thus, medieval queens can be studied as intercessory characters beneath the lights of gender analysis since they had to go beyond their gender but confined within it; they were more than women but not men; their femininity should have been a synonym of female sex but circumstances and role demands sometimes asked for them to break free from essentialist conceptions of womanhood, and be eclipsed into a new one, or forcing society to form one itself in order to accommodate them into the “natural” order. Furthermore, they battled forces at a personal stage, where gender and sex interacted with politics, religion, class, age, and their own desires, ambitions and impulses. In other words, society and the individual woman, never disregarding context and place, often clash.

So far this introduction followed what I consider to be the most valuable theories of gender and sex to the matter at hand (or to a better understanding of these subjects). It served to remind the reader that we are dealing with a complex theme, one beset with problems and as I have been trying to expose one who is a social *construct* and not an intrinsic condition. Studying queens in the middle Ages is a challenge. Studying queens in the middle Ages as female characters who operated beyond their sex and their gender

is even more of a dare. But to study queens in the Middle Ages who are separated by time, space and social context can be the death of this artist.

My passion for Anglo-Saxon society and the choices I made throughout my academic career made my path to cross with that of a queen who is a critical source to study the English succession in the 11th century: Emma of Normandy. She also figures in the Scandinavian narratives of the same period and is at the core of the Norman background in England, pre and after the Norman conquest of 1066. Pauline Stafford, who I consider to be, unarguably, the greatest expert on Emma's career, defines her as the first of the early medieval queens. In fact, Emma is the first and only queen to be depicted through contemporary portraiture. Her life spun a turbulent period in the English history, involving one foreign conquest, and a second one which deemed her as one of the principal causes of justification of the action. Her story and political path offers a challenge and an opportunity to study structures and frameworks within which she lived, but more importantly the roles and identities which she, as individual woman, combined under the title of "Queen".

To confine my research to this character could have been the safest option. Research after research has shown me that Emma is ultimately an unknown queen to the Portuguese academia spectrum. I could perhaps use this reality to become an authority on the subject. But I have no such desire of greatness, for my work and my vision are humble and I am aware that I am still an infant in this world of research methodology, critical analysis and historical theories. Besides, I am in no position to challenge the English researchers who have dedicated years of investigation to the incredible task of fetching Emma's story from the shadows and get it in touch with a more general public, not only scholars. Similarly, I thought it was important to develop a work where Emma was a central figure or one of the key figures, in order to bring it to the Portuguese public. Following a suggestion of my professor and mentor Ana Maria Rodrigues, I

decided to focus also on Urraca and Teresa's stories as well. This is an interesting trio because of the traits they possess. Not only they create a bridge between the Iberian and the Anglo-Saxon worlds but also prove how the same traits can be applied to three apparently different women, separated in time and space, and create points of intercession between cultures and between their careers.

My goal with this thesis is not to biography the three women. What I propose is an analysis of their paths as queens, the various identities which can be conveyed in one title, their roles as wives and mothers, their relations with their husbands and their sons, and their powers and respective *status* in each relation. Thus, the first chapter will provide a short though hopefully comprehensive background on their lives. The second shall address the problems of terminology of "queen" and all the various identities it can convey. Therefore it also becomes appropriate to address some concerns on "Queenship" here. The analysis follows the usage of the following titles: *domina*, queen (*regina*), mother, wife, and *mater regis*. Although some are part of an Anglo-Saxon context and *a priori* applied only to the English scenario, and therefore to Emma, it is my purpose to demonstrate that such titles and their meanings can be transposed to the Iberian context, that is to say, to address Urraca and Teresa in their respective roles as queens, mothers and wives when it is workable and relevant to do so.

Moreover, some particularities must be addressed in chapter two in order to convey what is possible from the queen *persona* specifically Emma's usage of *conlaterana regis* and Urraca's usage of *imperatrix*. Consequently, we must explore the definitions of empire and *imperium* - *imperium* as judicial and political power over the territory, military *imperium*, and their correlation with the old and new notions of conquest, annexation, and power to exercise authority on others. Again, the Anglo-Saxon context and Emma's second husband Cnut claims of an "informal empire" serves as a point of study as well. Performing roles as expected by tradition and society

sometimes covered the power and authority such roles actually possess. The purpose here is to determine if these three queens could possess *imperium* too, in their various concepts, and exercise it in their own right, or needed to share status with their male counterpart.

Chapter three addresses the pictorial images of each character. These portrayals are also indications of these women's *status* and power and their importance throughout and after their lifetime. Moreover, the progressive construction of the Virgin Mary queenly status can be seen as enhancements of queenly office, and used when analysing and correlating these depictions. I chose to focus on Emma's two only known pictures, one from the frontispiece of the *Liber Vitae* of New Minster Abbey, where she is portrayed with Cnut, and the other on the cover of the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, a work she commissioned, where she is with two of her sons. The images are a complementary portrait into some index of her power, as queen and wife, and as queen, mother and widow, and a sign of her self-importance to her husband and later to her sons.

For Urraca, I decided to analyse the symbolism and depiction of the Castilian queen in *Tumbo A* from Santiago's Cathedral because it offers more parallels with Emma's images in terms of symbolism and concerns strategies they both created to justify their authority. In Urraca's case, it was also a strategy to reinforce her legitimacy and heritage. Finally, Teresa's image at *Tumbo of Toxosoutus* is the only depiction of the Portuguese queen dated more approximate to her death. The image reveals three characters that are related through familiar ties: Bermudo Perez of Trava, his wife Urraca of Portugal, Teresa's daughter, and Teresa herself. Teresa appears as the legitimizing figure, but her position and insignias are similar to that of Urraca's and Emma's and the motifs of enthronement offer possibilities to discover and explore interesting parallels.

Finally, chapter four deals with the relationship between mothers and sons and the possibilities the same relationship could pose to legitimize their descendants. They affirmed their claims through the female line, through a link to the *genitrix*, whatever suited their needs best. Emma's relation with her two sons, Harthacnut and Edward, offers complexities and a role of their own. With Harthacnut, Emma was *mater regis*, ruling alongside her son; Edward after few years confiscated his mother's lands and exiled her, reducing her power drastically. But in the end, it was William the Conqueror and his supporters who would put Emma as a key figure to justify the conquest of England, by demonstrating her as a Norman royal woman, Edward's *genitrix*, the womb of the late English queen, through which William had the right to the crown. Alfonso VII and Alfonso Henriquez relationship with their respective mothers are apparently very different from Edward and Emma's. Firstly, because Urraca was queen regnant and Teresa self-proclaimed *regina*. Secondly, both sons evoked their mothers' memory in charters to prove their royalty and their right to rule. We shall address some examples of this matter and the usage of *genitrix* applied to the two queens by their respective offspring.

Queens not only managed the royal household. They exercised an office, almost always subsidiary and subordinate, but one that legitimized their authority and gave them sovereign functions. These three queens I chose to discuss and analyse follow beyond these conventional borders. One because she became queen regnant and the pre-existing social conventions suffered a blow and society had to create a new discourse in order to address the new reality, or to submit the new reality into the old order (normally resorting to defamation); another was queen-consort for two times, and thrived in power and status by adjusting to the vicissitudes of living in a foreign country and in her relations with her two husbands and respective offspring; the other was not

born a queen nor became one through marriage to a king, but eventually claimed that title to herself, and reigned as such, resorting to family lineage and blood claims.

These three women had to enter a game of chess where they were mainly viewed as pawns to establish alliances and consolidate the exterior and interior political affairs of the kingdoms, but in fact were masters in dealing with their deemed “weaker sex” and managed to eclipse beyond their gender to affirm themselves as rulers on their respective realms.

Chapter 1 - Three queens, three lives

The lives of the three female personalities mentioned are far greater than the sparse narratives we shall provide in this chapter. It is not my intent to create three extensive biographies in the following pages, but rather to present their stories as concise and meaningful narratives, necessary to the creation of basic notions and knowledge on the characters, for the sake of a better understanding of the subjects, themes and hypotheses I want to explore and present with this thesis.

1.1 - Emma of Normandy

If only the study of Emma was simple and generalist, her story would perhaps be resumed to a bare skeleton. Yet, it is complex because of the contrasting silences and reshaping narratives that survived. Her bones became entangled in many stories, between English narratives as well as Scandinavian and Norman ones, each with their own plots and details, refinement and retelling. However, the following pages are by no means an attempt at write Emma's biography. That has been done so already.¹⁷ For the purpose of this thesis and themes I propose to discuss further on, I must confine my writing to a more broadening approach. Yet, and due to Emma's relative anonymity to the Portuguese public, I shall try not to do so at the expense of mediocrity.

Emma "Ælgifu" was born in Normandy as one of the nine known children of count/duke Richard I, and daughter of his Danish-descendent wife Gunnor/Gunnora,¹⁸

¹⁷ For those interested in a dense and complex portrait of this female character, I recommend the study done by Pauline Stafford in STAFFORD (2001), Pauline, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-Century England*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers

¹⁸ It is still debatable if she was a child from his second union with Gunnor, or from his first legitimate wife, Emma, daughter of Hugh the Great, duke of the Franks, and sister of Hugh Capet. The debate is sustained upon an onomastic claim that Emma entered the Norman nameflock through Emma, Richard's

sister of Richard II and of Robert Archebishop of Rouen. Dukes Richard III and Robert were her nephews and she was the great-aunt of Duke William, better known in England as the Conqueror. By c.1000 the Norman ruling family was in many ways French, but never forgot their Northern roots. Through Richard I, Emma was the great-grand-daughter of the Viking warrior Rollo¹⁹ and grand-daughter of William Longsword. From Gunnor, she inherited a family history which took pride in its Danishness. Anything else before her arrival to England leaves researchers tripping in the dark.

Little is known from Emma's life before her marriage to the English king Æthelred II, the Unready, in 1002. Her date of birth is unknown. The first reference to Edward, later the Confessor, is from c.1005,²⁰ which means that she could not be much younger than

first wife. See STAFFORD (2001), Pauline, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-Century England*, Oxford, Blackwell publishers, p. 209. However, the later Norman chroniclers, largely based on William of Jumieges's *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, provide the stronger claims and support the theory that Emma was Gunnor's daughter. See *Emma (...)* apud TOLL (1921), Johannes-Michael, *Englands Beziehungen zu den Niederlanden bis 1154*, Historische Studien 145, Berlin, p. 41; STAFFORD (2001), pp. 209-2010. I am inclined to accept this preposition for the sake of the narrative I want to prove and debate here.

¹⁹ Rollo was a Scandinavian rover who made himself independent of King Harald I of Norway and sailed off to raid Scotland, England, Flanders, and France. During pirating expeditions in c.911, he established himself in an area along the Seine River. Charles III the Simple of France held off his siege of Paris, battled him near Chartres, and negotiated the treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte, giving him the part of Neustria that came to be called Normandy. Rollo in return agreed to end his brigandage. More on the beginnings of the duchy see SEARLE (1986), Eleanor, *Frankish Rivalries and Norse Warriors*, California, California Institute of Technology. Available online at «<http://authors.library.caltech.edu/27443/1/HumsWP-0118.pdf>»; BOURTE (2003), Pierre, "Les négociations du Traité du Saint-Clair-Sur-Epte selon Dudon de Saint Quentin". *La progression des Vikings, des raids à la colonisation*, edited by Anne-Marie Flambard Héricher, Cahiers du GRHIS, n°14, Université du Rouen, pp. 83-103.

²⁰ *Codex diplomaticus aevi Saxonici* (1865), edited by Benjamin Thorpe. Available online at «<https://archive.org/details/diplomatariumang00thoruoft>»; King Æthelred II recognizes Edward as heir and bestows him lands (in *Æthelred 1006*, pp. 341-342, 344-345). The first mention to Emma appears in the same document. She is a witness to her son's royalty and named *regina*, presenting an inextricable link between "mother" and "queen" – "Ego Ælfgifu regina soiens testimonium adhibui" p. 345.

twelve and not older than twenty in 1002. The *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* makes a reference to her first public appearance with an infant Harthacnut in 1023,²¹ and she could not have been more than forty at the time. Therefore, she was probably born not earlier than 980s and not after 995.

The absence of evidence about her age makes her childhood path obscure. We have no way of knowing what she might have learned with her parents. Nevertheless, Emma had her own mother as a vivid example of a widow's power. Gunnor had been Dudo of St Quentin's patron and commissioned along with her son and brother-in-law the celebrating history of the Normans and of the family line in particular. By the twelfth century, Gunnor was considered matriarch of the line. She was successful in celebrating, shaping and editing the family history to strengthen her status and authority in the court of Rouen. Her relationship with her son Richard might be considered fruitful by charters where the duke confirms his mother's donations to dioceses and by Gunnor serving as his witness in others.²² Family politics and recurring patterns are evident - Emma would also take a similar path of action in 1037 onwards.. Yet, if Gunnor was able to maintain and glorify her Danish ancestry before and during widowhood because it was desirable for Richard I and II, Emma would not feel such freedom to be Norman after 1016 or 1035. Nonetheless, both women unified differences in families: Gunnor's Danish identity played its part in the Norman past, and Emma, with her English name of Ælgifu and borrowed identity, played a similar role after 1016.

²¹ See *the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (ASC), MS D, s.a. 1023, p. 156.

²² "Gonnor matris comitis" in a donated propriety to the abbey of Mont Saint-Michel by charter dated from 1024-1026. Apparently, Gunnor held extensive lands in the surrounding areas named Britavilla and Domjean as part of her dower. See ROUND (1899), J. H., *Calendar of Documents preserved in France illustrative of the history of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol I - 918-1206, London, pp. 249-250.

Emma's entrance in England is set against a background of continuous armed struggles versus negotiations between the English king, the Norman family settlement, and Viking activity in the Channel. Æthelred II was the son of King Edgar and Queen Ælfthryth, and half-brother of King Edward, later the Martyr. His half-brother's murder²³ clouded his reputation from an early age and made it more difficult for the new king to rally support against the military raids done by Danes. The epithet of "Unready", or better, "ill-advised", denotes or the poor quality of advice he received from the *Witanagemot*, also known as *Witan*, or the little notice he paid to its suggestions.²⁴ This created an image of a misfit king.²⁵

²³ See ASC, s.a. 978, pp. 121 -123. Despite the evil plan being placed upon Edward's stepmother Ælfthryth by chroniclers such as Archbishop Dunstan there are no concrete evidences to support the allegation. Edward the Martyr's murder most likely occurred at the brick of a civil war between Edward's and Æthelred's supporters. See PALGRAVE (1921), Francis, *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, Vol. I, edited by Robert Hodgkin, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 165-16; ÆREALDOR (2005), Eadmund, "St Eadweard the Martyr – The Historical King", *A talk given at St Eadweard's Monastery*, Brookwood, pp. 9-12. Available online at <http://www.saintedwardbrotherhood.org/StEdwardMartyr.pdf>

²⁴ The *Witan* was an assembly composed by nobles and clerics, whose chief function was to advise the king in the matters of the kingdom, political and military. Before the unification of England in the 10th century and the end of the period known as the Heptarchy, each seven kingdoms – Essex, Kent, Northumbria, Mercia, Wessex, Sussex and East Anglia – had their *witanagemots*. Among other primarily functions and powers, the *Witan* had an active role in the "election" of the new king and it is thought that it could also depose an unpopular one. For more on "Witan", see LIEBERMANN (1961), Felix, *The National Assembly in the Anglo-Saxon Period*, New York, Halle; ÆREALDOR (2005), pp. 9-10. Æthelred was supported by the *Witan* to be crowned king but during his reign their relations were not in the best of terms. After Swein's invasion and Æthelred's exile in 1013, the Dane made the *Witan* proclaim him as king, denoting the importance such council had in the English society. When Swein died and Æthelred returned, the *Witan* accepted him as king "if only he would govern his kingdom more justly than he had done in the past". See ASC, MS E, s.a. 1014, p. 145.

²⁵ See KEYNES (1986), Simon, "A Tale of Two Kings: Alfred the Great and Æthelred the Unready". *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, n° 36, pp. 195–217. Available online at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3679065>

Æthelred had begun his reign fighting the most offensive Viking attacks.²⁶ From 994 to 1000 the king and his eldest sons, Edmund Ironside and Æthelstan, measured forces with several fleets, which in turn would find refuge in Norman harbours and buyers for their loot in Norman markets. This context brought England and Normandy together and made the two uncomfortable neighbours. The power of the Danes in English territory grew with each year due to the extensive lands and tributes paid in order to placate their violent raids. Æthelred dealt with the Danish pressure through military expeditions that turned into massacres, not placating at all the Danes. Along the way, the English king decided to negotiate a Norman marriage to seek support for his cause.

Æthelred was not desperate for an heir for he had already at least three sons who could succeed him (Edmund, Æthelstan and Eadwig). Emma's ancestry might have been a key decisive factor, since she was Gunnor's descendant, and thus half-Danish. Emma's marriage to Æthelred did not end Norman help to the Viking fleets but ensured that Richard II would continue his affairs more discretely.²⁷ On his side, the Norman duke was eager to achieve new heights of power and extend his network of connections off-continent through this union.

²⁶ After devastating coastal territories as Sandwich, Ipswich, Portland and Southampton, as well as several other settlements on the valley of the Thames and Leicester, the English suffered a major defeat in the battle of Maldon in 991. To prevent another disaster, Æthelred II was advised by Sigeric, archbishop of Canterbury, and Aelfheah, bishop of Winchester, to pay the first *Danegeld*, a tax disguised as tribute to buy off the Danes in exchange for peace. See ASC, MS A, F, E, s.a. 991, pp.126-127. Albeit the excessive amounts of payment and continuous agreements, hostilities continued. In 994, the warriors Swein Forkbeard and Anlaf / Olaf of Denmark sacked London, and other cities in the county of Kent, Sussex and Essex. See *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi Chronicon ex chronicis* (1848), edited by Benjamin Thorpe, p. 151. Available online at «<https://archive.org/details/florentiiwigorn00florgoog>»; ASC, e.g. MS E, s.a. 994, p. 127.

²⁷ See STAFFORD (2001), p. 216.

Emma arrived in England in 1002. Stafford argues that Richard II would probably be eager to see his sister crowned and consecrated. In fact, the precise timing of the marriage owed much to the English royal family developments. The death of Ælfthryth, Æthelred's mother, the dowager-queen, and Æthelred's first wife, Ælfgifu of Northumbria, around the same time, allowed conditions such as a full Christian marriage, consecration and even assurances about the inheritance of Emma's future sons, as well as dower and dowry.²⁸ Emma received in marriage a major stake over cities like Exeter and Winchester, lands in the surrounding areas and the North East Midlands.²⁹ The king already had ten children from his first wife, and Emma would bore him three more: two sons, Edward, future the Confessor, and Alfred, and a daughter, Godgifu. Emma's union gave her an English identity, *Aelfgifu*,³⁰ and the title or epithet of "Lady" with its traits of complexity.³¹ She would never again be recognized nor acknowledged by her Norman name.

The choice offers interesting possibilities of exploring Emma's role during all of her career. Firstly, she adopted or she was given a powerful female name, evoking popular and iconic female rulers such as Ælfgifu of Shaftesbury (d. 944), known as Saint Ælfgifu, first wife of Edmund I, mother of kings Eadwig and Edgar,³² or Ælfgifu, consort of King Eadwig during a brief period (c. 956-957) whom after the break-up of her marriage, enjoyed some peace, prosperity and remained in good understanding with

²⁸ Apparently Emma's dowry never came through. See STAFFORD (2001), pp. 217-218.

²⁹ The ASC refers Emma came with a Norman entourage. Hugh, one of her servants, is referred as being appointed by Emma as reeve of Exeter. MS F, s.a. 1003, p.134; STAFFORD (1997), Pauline, "Emma: the Power of the Queen", *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*, edited by Anne Duggan, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, p. 11.

³⁰ See ASC, MS A, s.a. 1002, p.94 "(...) And in the same Lent came the lady, Richard's daughter, Emma Elfgive, hither to land (...)"; *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi Chronicon ex chronicis* (1848), p.156.

³¹ See Chapter 2 of this thesis.

³² See ASC, MS D, s.a. 955, p. 113: "Eadwig succeeded in Mercia, and his brother Edgar to Mercia: they were sons of King Edmund and St. Ælfgifu"

King Edgar, Eadwig's brother who succeeded him, and the royal house.³³ Even Æthelred's first wife was named Ælfgifu.

Secondly, the name has a cultural meaning besides a dynastic one. The Anglo-Saxon culture has undoubtedly some similarities with the Germanic, Nordic and Celtic cultures. At this time, England was a puzzle and heterogeneous country, in a medieval Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon context, a miscellany of pagan and Christian past and present. A name is not merely a name. In a warrior culture where weapons were as vital as a limb or as important as family and ancestry, to name a sword for example, is to give it mystical strength; to give a name is to give power, ancestry, lineage or godlike and "otherworld" connections.

In common Germanic, the ancestor language for both Old English, German and the Scandinavian languages, "Ælf" was one of the nouns that was used in personal names and was appropriated into Old English, almost invariably as a first element – e.g. Ælfwine, Ælfric, Ælfweard, Ælfwaru for male; Ælfleda, Ælfgifa, Ælfthryth, Ælfgifu for female. Thus, Ælfgifu derives from *ælf* "elf" and *gifu*, meaning "gift"; altogether, it means "Elf-gift" or "Faie-gift". A significant coincidence since "Emma" in Saxon language means "help-giver"³⁴. The Germanic, Celtic and Nordic culture comprise the idea that elf/faie is a designation for a supernatural creature connected to the Otherworld, a mystical being of extreme beauty, capable both of bringing good fortune

³³ A will attributed to this Ælfgifu provides evidence that she was a powerful landowner. She bequeathed extensive estates in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Hertfordshire, considerable sums of money and various objects of value to ecclesiastical houses, closest relatives and members of the royal family. See *S 1484 - Ælfgifu's will* (AD 966 x 975) from the Old Minster archive, 1930, edited and translated by D. Whitelock, *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, Cambridge Studies in English Legal History. Cambridge. Available online at <<http://www.anglo-saxons.net>>. She also appears under King Edgar's patronage in charters as "matrona Aelfgifu, his kingswoman" corroborating the amicable relationship between herself and the royal house; See *S 737* and *S 738*.

³⁴ See HALL (1854), Matthew, *Lives of the Queens of England before the Norman Conquest*, Blanchard and Lea, p. 396. Available online at <https://archive.org/details/livesqueensengl05strigoogg>

to people or hindering them.³⁵ In Old Norse mythology, they are sometimes associated with pagan gods. The “faie” or “fey”, later “fairy”, are associated not only with the Celtic mystical realm, but also to the inhabitants of the Otherworld, of the *Annwryn*, the Irish “Land of Youth” (*Tir Na Nóg*), to the Avalon of the Arthurian myth.³⁶ They are usually invisible beings, guardians of the earth and rivers. In Welsh mythology, Elves are also known as *Ellyllon*, living in the woods, and tend to hide from human eyes. They are ruled, along with the fairies, by the King of the *Annwryn*, Gwyn ap Nudd, and are one of the five branches of the *Tylwyth Teg*, “The Beautiful People”.³⁷

Albeit the mystical power of the name, Emma was bestowed with a legacy of *motifs* and popular memory that gave her strong links to the Anglo-Saxon *imaginarium* and history which denotes the role she was chosen to fulfill: to unite Normans, in and out of the English territory, with the English people. She would bring “help” and peace. How much of that dream was unachieved...

³⁵ Studies made by linguistics such as Jakob Grimm suggests that “Elf” derives from the common Germanic form *alþi-z* and *alþa-z*, a word connected to whiteness. Grimm thought that “whiteness” implied positive moral connotations. The Icelandic historian Snorri Sturlusson, for instance, in his researches into the Scandinavian myths, suggested also that elves could be divinities of light, associating *ælf* with the Old Icelandic legendary heroes called *Álfr* with the elves, and the Old Norse gods, the *Æsir*. Alaric Hall gives yet another tentative approach in his Ph.D. dissertation, suggesting that later evidence of elves both associated with whiteness and lightness with feminine beauty may indicate that it was precisely this idea of beauty that gave elves their name. In Old English, its feminine derivative *ælbinne* glosses words for nymphs and with the word *ælfscýne*, which meant 'elf-beautiful' and is attested describing seductively beautiful women. See HALL (2004), Alaric, *The Meanings of Elf and Elves in Medieval England*, Ph.D.dissertation, University of Glasgow, pp. 55-57. Available online at [«http://www.alarichall.org.uk/ahphdful.pdf»](http://www.alarichall.org.uk/ahphdful.pdf); HALL (2007), *Elves in Anglo-Saxon England: Matters of Belief, Health, Gender and Identity*, the Boydell Press, Woodbridge. Available online at [«http://odroerirjournal.com»](http://odroerirjournal.com).

³⁶ The role of fairies in Welsh mythology influenced the rest of the English territory and can be found in several tales. See VARANDAS (2007), Angélica, *Mitos e Lendas Celtas do País de Gales*, Lisboa, Livros e Livros, pp. 256, 276, 284.

³⁷ For the different types of fairies and elves and more bibliography on the matter see VARANDAS (2007), pp. 294–301.

The arrival of the new Queen was celebrated in blood. Æthelred's order of massacre in 1002 in Danish settlements prompted Swein's successful attack on Exeter in 1003. An equal response by the Dane but perhaps also a deliberated one to a marriage clearly designed to cut off the Danish armies from Norman harbours. The dangers and suspicion of her family background might have left Emma walking in shacking ground, until she gave birth to a son, Edward, in c.1005.³⁸ After all, a queen could only become a more assured member of the family when and if she fulfilled her role of royal vessel, for her own glory, the king's and the kingdom.

The role of Queen is unlikely dissociated from the role of Mother. Emma's life during Æthelred's reign is dominated by marriage and children. After Edward, she had Godgifu c.1007 and Alfred in c.1012.³⁹ The two sons would be confirmed as throne-worthy, though nothing suggests they would succeed their father.⁴⁰ Still, both Edward and Alfred were *æthelings* ("princes"), had kingly names and their mother's queenship and the legitimacy of her marriage with Æthelred was undisputable by the usage of *regina* in charters confirming the children's birth, possibly making them a reason to be feared by their stepbrothers.⁴¹

³⁸ First mentions of Edward appear in 1005 charters onwards. E.g. *S 910* and *S 911* in [«http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/931.html»](http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/931.html)

³⁹ The birth of children was marked by new land grants, as by gifts from mother to child. Alfred first appearance is probably dated c. 1012, in a charter (*S. 925*) where Æthelred grants a manor (*predium*) in Winchester with a church to Emma Ælgifu on occasion of the birth of a son "de utero pathernali". Further mentions of Alfred in the *Codex diplomaticus aevi Saxonici* (1865) and other charters of grants are frequent during 1013 and after. See e.g. *S 931* in [«http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/931.html»](http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/931.html) or the reference to the same charter in the *Codex*, "Ædelred -1013", p. 166.

⁴⁰ The charters point out Æthelred's eldest son Athelstan as first witness and first heir until his death in 1014, and after Athelstan, Æthelred's now eldest surviving son, Edmund Ironside. It seems that the older princes were with their father during the increasing warfare context, involved in military planning and action whilst the younger ones remained with their mother, or with servants attached to her household.

⁴¹ See e.g. *S 910*, *S 911*, *S 916*, *S 926* in "King Æthelred II charters" in [«http://www.esawyer.org.uk»](http://www.esawyer.org.uk).

Nevertheless, whatever phantom dispute that might have occurred was annulled by Swein's attack and occupation in 1013 and the English king and family being forced to exile occupation. Emma and her sons sought refuge in Normandy in her brother Richard II's court. Æthelred soon followed, but Edmund and Eadwig remained behind. In Normandy, Emma might have had more contact with her mother Gunnor and witnessed the power and benefits of a well-established widowhood.⁴²

The death of Swein on February 1014 ensured Æthelred's return. He was accompanied by Emma while Edward and Alfred remained in Normandy.⁴³ The English king would rule briefly and die in 1016 leaving Emma a widow. She remained in London while a violent armed struggle for the throne of England broke out between Æthelred's heir, Edmund Ironside, and Swein's son, Cnut. After Edmund's defeat in the battle of Ashingdon, on 18 October 1016,⁴⁴ the kingdom was divided between them. Then Edmund's death in November allowed Cnut to seize the rule of all England by the end of the same year.

The Danish conqueror had another union with a noble woman from a prominent Mercian family, Ælgifu of Northampton. They had two sons, Swein and Harold Harefoot. But that did not prevent Cnut to marry Emma in 1017 through a religious ceremony as a way to consolidate his authority and power in England.⁴⁵ However,

⁴² Robert of Torigny records the death in 1030 of "Gunnor comitissa, uxor primi Ricardi". See *Chronique de Robert de Torigny*, Tome I, 1972, edited by Leopold DeLisle, Rouen, Société de l'Histoire de la Normandie, p. 36. Available at <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k36182g/f111.item>

⁴³ The reaffirmation of Emma's importance to her husband as mother of two potential heirs after Swein's death might have been what made her return with him to England in 1014. See STAFFORD (2001), p.233-234

⁴⁴ See ASC, MS E, p. 152.

⁴⁵ Ælgifu and Cnut's union might have been a relationship specific to Scandinavia, a form of alliance-building. See LAYNESMITH (2014), Joanna, "Queens, Concubines and the Myth of Marriage *More Danico*: Royal Marriage Practice in tenth and eleventh-century England", Graduated Centre for Medieval

Emma had somehow fallen into Cnut's hands by force. Danish *skalds* and contemporary sagas about Cnut's campaign in England tell of a possible kidnapping.⁴⁶ The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle refers that Cnut, already crowned king of England in 1017, had demand "the widow of the dead king to be brought to him"; The construction of the sentence offers the possibility of interpretation though "brought" may have been the most neutral word found for "fetch" or the intimidating "kidnapping".⁴⁷ In the *Liðmannaflokk's skald*, for example, Emma appears as a widow trapped within a besieged London ("she dwells at Stone/within walls of stone"). She is part of the prize and loot of victory, a female conquest to prove male valour and glory, a trait common in Scandinavian epic narratives, Celtic and Germanic. Force marriage was thus a metaphor for conquest and granted superiority for the Dane towards a king to whom they saw as tributary.⁴⁸

Cnut's reign marks the second stage of Emma's career. Her sons by Æthelred remained in Normandy and she had two more children by her second husband: one son, Harthacnut, born in c.1018,⁴⁹ and a daughter, Gunnhild, in c.1020.⁵⁰ Alongside Cnut,

Studies, University of Reading, pp. 8-12. Available in pdf format at [«http://blogs.reading.ac.uk/trm/files/2014/03/GCMSJoanna-Laynesmith.pdf»](http://blogs.reading.ac.uk/trm/files/2014/03/GCMSJoanna-Laynesmith.pdf)

⁴⁶ Kong Knuds Mænd fik Nys om Dronning Emmas Forehavende, og da hun og hendes Folk vare i Færd med at gaae om Bord, kom Knuds Mænd dertil, bemægtigede sig Skibet med alt, hvad der var paa samme, og de førte Dronningen til Kong Knud. ("King Canute's men got news of Queen Emma's purpose; and when she and her people were in the act of go on board, came Canute's men there, seized the ship with everything that was in the same, and they led the queen to King Canute"). See *Knytlinga Saga* (1829), translated by C. C. Rafn, Copenhagen. Available online at [«http://heimskringla.no/wiki/Knytlinga_Saga_\(C.C.Rafn\)»](http://heimskringla.no/wiki/Knytlinga_Saga_(C.C.Rafn))

⁴⁷ See ASC, D, E, pp.154-155

⁴⁸ See ASHDOWN (1930), Margaret, *Norse and English documents regarding the reign of Æthelred the Unready*, New York, Cambridge University Press, pp. 140-141; Compare with translation and analysis by POOLE (1991), Russel, *Viking Poems on War and Peace: A Study in Skaldic Narrative*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, pp. 86-115, especially p. 89, 113.

⁴⁹ First appearance by Harthacnut *princeps regis* is in charter S 952 dated c.1018. Available online at [«http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/952.html»](http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/952.html); According to the ASC, Emma was accompanied by her

Emma ruled as a true counterpart. Her presence in charters and other documents rose exponentially, as we shall see in upcoming chapters, contrasting with the denoted silence and specific role as a mother during Æthelred's rule.

Cnut died in 1035 and inaugurated a third stage in Emma's life, focused on questions concerning the succession to the kingdoms of Denmark, Norway and England. Swein and his mother Ælfgifu had been sent to Norway to act as regents in 1030⁵¹ whilst Harthacnut was dispatched to Denmark with Úlfr þórgilsson and Thorkell, Cnut's most important swordsman, and they acted as regents and shared responsibility in rule with the young prince.⁵² Therefore, when Cnut died, Harold Harefoot was supposedly the only son in England. In the next two years, he would collect support and measure forces with no other than Emma, who remained at Winchester, the centre of power, with Cnut's military household and in possession of the royal treasure.

From 1035 to 1036, Emma acted as a powerful woman, with a strategy of her own and means to enact it. Part of that power derived from her motherhood. Tradition says that she was holding the throne to Harthacnut, due to a pact she had forged with Cnut when they married. Allegedly, she had made him promise that her sons by

"royal son Harthacnut" in a religious ceremony in 1023, which might indicate that the little prince would not have been more than five years old at the time, making 1008 the most plausible date for his birth. ASC, MS D, s.a. 1023.

⁵⁰ A daughter of Cnut and Emma was betrothed to Henry, future Emperor Henry III, son of King Conrad II of Germany as a pledge of friendship in c.1025 – "Cum rege Danorum sive Anglorum mediante archiepiscopo fecit pacem. Cuius etiam filiam imperator filio suo deposcens uxorem" – and later married him in 1036 "Tempore illo Conradus imperator filiam Chnut regis Heinrico filio accepit in matrimonium" BREMEN, Adam of, *Adamus: Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, Liber II, cap. 54, 63. Online edition in Latin. Available at «<http://hbar.phys.msu.su/gorm/chrons/bremen.htm>» [s.d]. Gunhild is in the German court in 1036. See STAFFORD (2001), pp. 235, 238;

⁵¹ See BOLTON (2009), Timothy, "Chapter Five: Cnut and the *Imperium* of Late Anglo-Saxon England, *The Empire of Cnut the Great: Conquest and Consolidation of Power in Northern Europe in the Early Eleventh Century*, Boston, Brill, p. 147

⁵² See ASC, MS C, s.a. 1023, p. 157; see BOLTON (2009), pp. 218-219

Æthelred would remain safe in Normandy if their union provided a male descendent. In that case, it would be their son and neither one of their first unions to succeed the conqueror on the English throne. In 1036, Alfred and Edward returned from their refuge in Normandy. Alfred was captured and killed in suspicious circumstances, with doubt falling upon Harold and one of Emma's greatest supporters, Godwine earl of Wessex. Edward apparently reached his mother in Winchester but returned quickly to Normandy. In 1037, Harold was successful in banishing Emma and was crowned king of England. The queen was exiled to Flandres, where she lived in the court of Count Baldwin, until 1039. Harthacnut would later join her.

In 1040, following the death of Harold, mother and son, accompanied by a fleet, returned to England where Harthacnut was accepted as king. Emma became queen-mother, *mater regis*, initiating the final stage of her career. In 1041, Edward was associated in some way to rule, forming a trinity of power.⁵³ She commissioned the *Encomium Emma Reginae*, a highly political work written during those two year time to praise Emma and Cnut's lineage, describing Emma's own idealized view of such rule in the trinity of mother and sons and their road to power.

Harthacnut died in 1042 and Edward became king in turn. Shortly after, Edward confiscated his mother's extensive lands and treasures, leaving her with only the necessary to survive. Her allies and servants also fell into disgrace. She would later be restored to court c. 1044 but never again to exercise great power. Emma probably lived the rest of her years in retirement in Winchester, though she disappeared from view after 1045. She died on 6 March 1052 and was buried in the Old Minster alongside Cnut.

⁵³ I will address this theme in Chapter 4.

1.2- Urraca of León-Castile

Once more, certain aspects of Urraca's birth, her marriages, the birth of her sons— their number and parentage – and her romantic affairs are permanently vague to the eyes of the historians. Although the chroniclers of her time and those who echoed them wrote political history, not biographies, the documents provide important data to reconstruct an image of Urraca and her deeds necessary to our discussion.

Urraca ruled in her own right as Queen of one of the most important kingdom of Western Europe of the 12th century. No known chronicler wrote down the date of her birth. Just like Emma, we need to calculate indirectly. Urraca was the daughter of King Alfonso VI, known as Emperor and Conqueror of Toledo⁵⁴ and his second wife, Constanza,⁵⁵ younger daughter of the duke of Burgundy Robert the Old and his wife Helia of Semur, and granddaughter of the French king Robert II, the Pious. Their union cannot be precisely dated as well. Alfonso VI's first wife, Agnes, daughter of Duke William VIII of Aquitaine, apparently produced no surviving children. On May 22, 1077 she had disappeared from scene, presumably dead.⁵⁶ Constanza's first appearance in documents dates from 1079⁵⁷ and she was officially the king's consort in 1080.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ The Muslim city fell to Alfonso VI in 1085. It is considered to be the first major city in the Christian Reconquista. See REILLY (1988), Bernard F., "Chapter 9: The Reconquest of Toledo (1082-1086)", *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VI, 1065-1109*, Library of Iberian Resources Online, Princeton University Press. Available online at [«http://libro.uca.edu/alfonso6/alfonso.htm»](http://libro.uca.edu/alfonso6/alfonso.htm).

⁵⁵ Constanza was sister of the Hugh the Great, Abbot of Cluny. See DAVID (1947), Pierre, *Études historiques sur la Galice et le Portugal du VI^e au XII^e siècle*, Lisboa, Institut Français au Portugal, pp. 389-390.

⁵⁶ REILLY (1999), Bernard F., *The Kingdom of León-Castilla Under Queen Urraca, 1109-1126*, The Library of Iberian Resources Online, Princeton University Press, p. 10. Available at [«http://libro.uca.edu/urraca/urraca.htm»](http://libro.uca.edu/urraca/urraca.htm)

⁵⁷ REILLY (1999), p. 11

⁵⁸ PALLARES (2006), Ermelindo, PORTELA, M^a del Carmen, *La Reina Urraca*, San Sebastián, Nerea, p. 16

That allows us to suppose that Urraca's birth occurred or in the earliest date, 1079, or in the latest, 1081.

The first child of this new marriage shattered illusions and hopes, since it was not a son but a daughter who was born, Urraca. Constanza could not have more offspring, leaving Alfonso VI to fulfil his desire for a male heir in the extramarital relations. Although he was married five times, none of his wives produced male offspring. From his concubines, Jimena Muñoz would give him two daughters: Elvira and Teresa/Tareja, future wife of Count Henry, countess and Queen of Portugal, and Zaida, a Muslim woman daughter or daughter-in-law of King of Seville Al Mutamid, gave him the desired heir Sancho.⁵⁹

The stages of Urraca's life might be divided into two. The first one is when she is still an *infanta*, without hope or pretensions to reign (something that not even her father would have wanted her do). She would marry Count Raimundo of Burgundy⁶⁰ and receive Galicia as her and her husband's domain. From their union, Sancha and Alfonso Raimúndez, future Alfonso VII, were born. Yet circumstances and coincidences dictated her future as Queen of León-Castile. The second stage starts when Urraca is appointed heir to the throne by Alfonso VI after the premature death of Sancho, and includes her marital problems and armed struggles with her second husband, Alfonso of Aragon, with her sister Teresa of Portugal and with her son Alfonso. She rules León-Castile from 1109 to 1126.

⁵⁹ PALLARES, PORTELA (2006), pp. 19-20. Sancho's date of birth is thought to be 1093 and was later killed in the battle of Uclés in 29th May 1108. See REILLY (1999), Chapter 1, p. 25.

⁶⁰ Raimundo and his cousin Henrique of Burgundy, who was to marry Urraca's half-sister Teresa, arrived at the Iberian Peninsula in 1087 as part of the group of men who accompanied duke Eudes I of Burgundy to León. See AMARAL (2012), Luis, and BARROCA, Mário, *A Condessa Rainha. Teresa*, Lisboa, Círculo de Leitores, pp. 25-51.

Pallares and Portela contradict the notion that Urraca was educated outside the court until her marriage to Raimundo. They state that a large part of Urraca's life before 1093 was spent in court, where, until Sancho's birth, her condition as the legitimate heir might have required some special attention.⁶¹ Urraca's childhood is thought to have been surrounded by a major feminine presence. Her mother would only die in 1093. She would have had contact with his father's concubines and we can presume she grew alongside her half-sisters Elvira and Teresa, closer in age to the firstborn. When she had between six or eight years, she married Count Raimundo, nephew of her mother and member of the French nobility. Their union was probably celebrated in the same year of Constanza's death, 1093, and the birth of her half-brother Sancho.⁶²

From heir to the throne to countess of Galicia, Urraca's personal status suffered a downfall in being passed on from her father's tutelage to her husbands', whose insistency on titles such as *Hispanie imperatoris domni Adefonsi gener* denotes Urraca as the conduit of political rights, thus confirming Raimundo's own status and personal desires. Until 1107, Urraca was not much more than the wife of an ambitious man. The daughter of the emperor and spouse of the count of Galicia was just the "nobilísima doña Urraca"⁶³. She was resigned to a role of mother between the years of 1095 and 1107 and the birth of a male heir c.1103⁶⁴ assured the best conditions of transmitting the succession.

⁶¹ PORTELA and PALLARES (2006), pp. 26-27

⁶² The First Chronicle of Sahagún mentions Constanza's death and the king's new marriage. See PUYOL Y ALONSO (1920), D. Julio, *Las Crónicas Anónimas de Sahagún*, digital edition (2010), Real Academia de Historia, Madrid, p. 30. However, Amaral and Barroca suggest that the marriage took place in 1091. See AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 54.

⁶³ Cf. *Historia Compostelana* (HC), 1994, edited by Emma Falque Rey, Madrid, Ediciones Akal, p. 80

⁶⁴ Urraca and Raimundo had two children: Sancha and Alfonso. Their date and place of birth is not precisely calculated, though it is estimated that Sancha was born between 1093 and 1095, and Alfonso c.1103. Cf. PORTELA and PALARES (2006), pp. 36-37 for the complete discussion on this matter.

Things changed for Urraca in 1107 and she truly began having an active role in the politics of the kingdom. Widow of Raimundo, who had died in the previous year, she proclaimed herself “lady” of all Galicia and probably resumed the tasks of government that she had initiated alongside her husband.⁶⁵ The death of Sancho in 1108 confirmed her as future queen of León-Castile as Alfonso VI would acknowledge his daughter’s rights to the throne. The nobles agreed with the royal designation but demanded that Urraca should marry again.⁶⁶ The choice of Urraca’s second husband was mostly determined by Alfonso VI on his deathbed. His preference would fall upon Alfonso I of Aragon, known as *el Batallador*, much to the dismay of several Castilian and Leonese nobles and frustration of the Portuguese counts.

The decision was supposedly taken because of Alfonso VI’s fearing the growing rivalries between the Leonese and Castilian parties and to neutralize the ambitions of Teresa’s husband. Such opened a path for a possible unification of León-Castile and Aragon. For her part, Urraca had to relinquish to the king’s wishes - and the nobles who agreed with him - against her will, “bonding me to the aragonese tyrant in execrable marriage”.⁶⁷ In remarrying, the government of Galicia would be passed on to her son.⁶⁸ If Alfonso and Urraca’s union failed to produce an heir, Alfonso Raimúndez was entitled to the kingdoms of León-Castile and Aragon.

⁶⁵ Urraca was now «totius Gallecie domina». See MOLINA (2002), Ángel G. Gordo, *apud* Recuero. M., *et. all., Documentos Medievales del Reino de Galicia: Doña Urraca (1195- 1126)* Xunta de Galicia, A. Coruña, Doc. 17 (13 de diciembre de 1107), p. 7; LÓPEZ (1900), F. A., *Historia de La Santa A.M. Iglesia de Santiago de Compostela, Tomo III, Seminario Conciliar Centrai*. Santiago de Compostela, Doc. XXV. pp. 75-76; See also the same reference cited by REILLY (1999), “Chapter 2: The Crisis of the Dynasty and the Aragonese Marriage”, p. 2.

⁶⁶ CAS, p. 35.

⁶⁷ «me casé contra mi voluntad com el sanguinário y cruel tirano aragonês, uniéndome infelizmente a él en nefando y execrutable matrimonio» Cf. HC, pp. 170-171.

⁶⁸ See HC p. 153

The death of the king in 1st July 1109 made the verdict definitive and Urraca and Alfonso I wed in the same year. But the levels of agreement and political collaboration between the two partners were somewhat constantly wavering. Their marriage lasted only three years - from 1109 to 1112 -, due to external pressure which made Urraca fear that her union with the *Batallador* would cut her off of her possessions in Galicia and make other territories drift away from her jurisdiction. She would ally to the Aragonese king's opponents and the conflict spread to other social groups, ending up in open war, with some attempts for a reconciliation that never worked out in the end. Moreover, another one of her greatest problems was her own half-sister Teresa, whom after Count Henríque's death in 1112 never ceased to try to extend her domains, and caused trouble for her sister in Galicia and in County of Portucale. Urraca would not marry again but had her romantic liaisons, especially with count Gómez González and count Pedro González de Lara; she had one son from each union.⁶⁹

From 1112 onwards, Urraca ruled as *regina* and «*imperatrix Yspanie*», making usage of her ancestry and the previous Alfonso VI's claims to the title of Emperor of All Spain.⁷⁰ To secure Alfonso Raimundez and his supporters' allegiance, Urraca had consented for her son to be crowned King of Galicia in the previous year,⁷¹ but kept her authority supreme: it is always Urraca who has the empire of Alfonso VI; Alfonso Raimundez, king, since he was in fact crowned and anointed, confirms documents from the start, because he is son of the queen. Her reign was also marked by power struggles

⁶⁹ See PALLARES and PORTELA (2006), pp. 48-50.

⁷⁰ See the following chapters of this thesis for broader notions on the subject, in particular chapter 2 for a full discussion on Urraca's titles. For Alfonso VI's importance for Urraca's discourse on lineage and ancestry, see Chapter 4.

⁷¹ First mentions of Alfonso Raimundez as king of Galicia, figuring alongside his mother in diplomas and charters, date from 1112. See RUIZ (2003) Irene, *La Reina Doña Urraca (1109-1126) Cancillería y Colección Diplomática*, Centro de Estudios e Investigación "San Isidoro", León, p. 398; PALLARES and PORTELA (2006), pp. 114-116

against him. She would face opposition due to her sex, in the eyes of men who thought a woman too fragile and unfit to rule. Urraca also quarreled with her sister Teresa's ambitions of expanding her territory. Teresa would be a fierce opponent, especially after her auto-proclamation as queen of Portugal in 1117.

Nevertheless, Urraca knew how to play her cards well to ensure she would remain with the crown in her head and power and authority over the kingdom. There are enough evidences of energy, independence and strong traits of character that eclipse the social image of an abominable woman and "bad queen" that the chroniclers, mostly clerics, tried to pass on. Nor even her son could escape his mother's legacy.⁷² It was not enough to topple up her seventeen years of uninterrupted reign. Queen Urraca died in March of 1126 in Saldaña.⁷³

1.3- Teresa of Portugal

The story of this female character is once more imperfect. To tell it is a difficult and sometimes ungrateful task. The available data is filled with voids and silences, making it almost impossible to create a storyline with a beginning, middle and end. A recent study from 2012 done by Portuguese historians, Luis Amaral and Mário Barroca, has been changing the way we look at this character through the construction of a very consistent portrait of a woman and her place in the familiar, human and political circles of her time.⁷⁴ We took most of our inspiration from it.

⁷² Such evidences shall be presented and discussed in the upcoming chapters.

⁷³ Urraca's last diploma is dated July 1125. Cf Doc.149, p. 592. See also LIPSKEY (1972), Glenn, *The Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor: A Translation of the Chronica Adefonsi imperatoris, with study and notes*, Book 1, The Library of Iberian Resources Online, p. 52. Available online at [«http://libro.uca.edu/lipskey/chronicle.htm»](http://libro.uca.edu/lipskey/chronicle.htm)

⁷⁴ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), *A Condessa-Rainha Teresa*, Lisboa, Círculo de Leitores.

Teresa's career draws parallels and is tied closely to that of her half-sister and Queen, Urraca. Both were active in politics, were pawns to their husbands' ambitions to rule, and yet when they died, they were the ones who took the reins of their kingdoms. They did not exercise power as a simple stage of transition until their sons were of age; they even used them to amplify their own. Yet, Teresa ended up being deposed by her son Afonso Henriques.

Teresa or Tareja was daughter of Alfonso VI and Ximena/Jimena Muñoz/Moniz. The king of León-Castile had Teresa's mother as his concubine from 1078 to 1080. The *infanta* was probably born c. 1079 because in the beginnings of the year of 1080 the king was married to Constanza of Burgundy, aunt of Count Henrique, Teresa's future husband. She had a sister, Elvira, who was born c. 1078 and later married Raymond of Saint-Gilles, count of Toulouse, another French noble who came to the Peninsula at the same time Raimundo and Henrique did.⁷⁵ Alfonso VI continued to guarantee for Jimena's well-being until the time of his death, granting her lands and several royal benefits, including naming her lieutenant of the castle of Ulver, unprecedented to date.⁷⁶ Like Urraca, Teresa would have lived in the court of her father until her hand was given to Henrique in marriage, approximately at the same time her sister Urraca became engaged to Raimundo. They would marry in 1095 or 1096⁷⁷ and had five children but only four survived: Urraca Henriques (c. 1095/1096), who would marry Bermudo Peres de Trava, Sancha Henriques (c. 1097- d. 1163), first married to count Sancho of Celanova and then to Fernando Mendes de Bragança II, Teresa Henriques (c. 1098)⁷⁸

⁷⁵ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 64.

⁷⁶ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 65.

⁷⁷ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 67. The first charter which states Henrique as "*gener adefo*" dates from 23rd June 1097. See ESTEFÂNIO (2011), Abel, "O "pacto sucessório" revisitado: o texto e o contexto", *Medievalista* [Online], 10, p. 43.

⁷⁸ The birth dates are all approximate. There is no official record to determinate exact ones. Nonetheless, it is truthfully established that Afonso Henriques had at least two sisters: Urraca Henriques and Sancha

and Afonso Henriques, the future first king of Portugal, born most likely in 1109 and died in December 1185.⁷⁹

Raimundo's death in 1107 as well as Sancho's in 1108 at Uclés violently reopened the problem of succession. Urraca was designated heir to the throne and Alfonso VI remarried her to King Alfonso I of Aragon, as we have seen before. Meanwhile, Henrique dreamt higher than ever, perhaps trying to occupy the political and military void left by Raimundo, causing the old king's wrath. He and Teresa were banished from court and their absence is noted during the first year of Urraca's reign.⁸⁰ For the next two years, the counts played a dual game, switching sides during the quarrel among Alfonso and Urraca, and were successful in taking the best out of the political conjunctures.

The death of Count Henrique in 24th April 1112 opened up Teresa's way to power in widowhood. The first months were fundamental to consolidate her rule and keep herself at the head of the Portuguese affairs, as *infanta* and countess. Teresa proceeded with her policy of obtaining loyalties through generous grants. She knew that no right to the possession or government of a territory could be secured without being accompanied by the sharing of goods and privileges, both to local families and ecclesiastical powers in which she relied on. In the meantime, Teresa also intensified

Henriques. Both are cited by D.Teresa in several official documents. Cf. FERNANDES (1978), Almeida, *Guimarães, 24 de Junho de 1128*, Revista de Guimarães pp. 20-21. Available online at <http://www.csarmento.uminho.pt/docs/ndat/rg/RG088_01.pdf>; There is a controversy regarding a third one, also thought to be named Teresa, who is said to have married Bermudo Peres de Trava. See AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 67. A confusion created by chroniclers as time went by, who had mistaken one sister for the other. Cf. BRANDÃO (1944), Fr. António, *Crónica do Conde D.Henrique, D.Teresa e Infante D.Afonso*, Porto, Livraria Civilização, pp. 127-129; FERNANDES (1978), p. 52; AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 70

⁷⁹ I follow the thesis presented by José Mattoso. See MATTOSO (2007), José, *D. Afonso Henriques*, directed by Roberto Carneiro, Maia, Temas e Debates, pp. 27, 31-33.

⁸⁰ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), pp. 162-163.

her pressure on Urraca, seeking her recognition on her legitimacy and status as daughter of a king, and consequent royal rights to the division of the kingdom of León-Castile. In fact, Teresa was certainly aiming for a possible division of the kingdom, a pact between siblings, much alike the so-called “pacto sucessório” Raimundo and Henrique had allegedly forged after they married the daughters of Alfonso VI. A document dated c.1110 where Urraca makes considerable grants to Teresa and swears “faithful friendship to her sister” in return for her committed action to “defend this honour” shows two strong women splitting power among them with the same easiness as men would have done.⁸¹

The *Crónicas Anónimas de Sahagún* tells of an episode in which she deliberately destroys one of the attempts of reconciliation between Alfonso of Aragon and Urraca by accusing her of poisoning him.⁸² Teresa is here portrayed as a despicable woman though she appears, just as Urraca, to have been smart and capable of using whatever weapons she had to face her adversaries, sometimes through diplomacy, others through intrigue and even military force. She knew how to play along with whom she considerate to be opportune for the moment and situation, to recover the lost power in case she saw herself in danger. She was capable of hiding and surfacing when needed. Teresa, like Urraca, manipulated the masculine world of warriors, nobles and powerful clerks to achieve her needs.

From 1117 onwards, Teresa would sign as *regina*⁸³. The public use of this title deepened the skirmishes between sisters. In 1120 the Portuguese queen would

⁸¹ Cf. RUIZ (2003), doc.12, pp. 374-375; «A Rainha D. Urraca jura amizade fiel à sua irmã D.Teresa (...) obrigando-se a infanta, por sua parte, a defender tanto esta “honra” como a que já possui.» AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 334.

⁸² CAS, pp. 57-58.

⁸³ See Chapter 2. Though her first documents where Teresa styles herself “queen” are only dated from 1117, a papal bull from June 1116 designates her *reginae*. See ERDMANN (1927), Carl, *Papsturkunden*

strengthen her relations with the bishop of Porto. For the first time, Afonso Henriques, confirms the grant with his sisters Urraca and Sancha. The future king would have between 11 years.⁸⁴ Teresa would use this form of familiar unity with her children in other occasions. After 1121 she appears allied to the Galician Trava family, especially to brothers Bermudo and Fernão Peres de Trava; herself and Afonso Henriques grew distant. The queen would develop a relationship with Fernão and had four daughters.⁸⁵

It is thought she had been previously involved with his brother Bermudo before he married her daughter Urraca in turn. Their fates had become intertwined in 1116 when the countess sided with their father against her sister Urraca, and sieged the queen in the castle of Sobroso. The confluence of interests must have been notorious and threatening because 1121 marks the beginning of the end of the most prominent figures of the Portucalense county in the curia of the county.⁸⁶ It is said that Teresa aimed for the unification of the Portucalense territory with the south part of Galicia, a subject we shall address further ahead. There is a growing presence and influence of Fernão Peres and his supporters over Teresa and in the government of the county.

In 1126, the death of Urraca brought Alfonso VII to the throne and in the next year he is riding towards the North of Portugal demanding his authority to be accepted

in *Portugal*, Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, doc n°16, pp. 169-170. Available online at <http://www.papsturkunden.gwdg.de/Erdmann_PUU_in_Portugal.pdf>

⁸⁴ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), pp. 335-336.

⁸⁵ See LÓPEZ-SANGIL (2005), José Luis, *La nobleza altomedieval gallega, la familia Froílaz-Trava*. La Coruña, Toxosoutos, pp. 121 ss; However, other historians only recognize the existence of two: Sancha Fernandez and Teresa Fernandez. See e.g. TORRES-SEVILLA (1998), Margarita, *Relaciones Fronterizas Entre Portugal y León en Tiempos de Alfonso VII: el Ejemplo de la Casa de Trava*, *Revista da Faculdade de Letras: História*. N° 15, 1, Porto, Universidade do Porto, pp. 307-310. Available online at <<http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/4011.pdf>>; TORRES-SEVILLA (1999), Margarita, *Linajes nobiliarios leoneses (siglos IX-XIII)*, Junta de Castilla y León, pp. 312-340.

⁸⁶ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), pp. 223-224; MATTOSO (2007), pp. 61-62; MATTOSO (1985), “A Primeira Tarde Portuguesa”, *Portugal Medieval. Novas Interpretações*, Lisboa, pp. 11-35

by his aunt Teresa and Fernão Peres de Trava.⁸⁷ Afonso Henriques took up the defence of the castle of Guimarães which had been placed under siege by his cousin during his campaign. Afterwards, the Portucalense barons, who already grew tired of Teresa and the Galician count, decided that a change at the head of government was necessary and arose in revolt.⁸⁸ On the 24th June 1128, the party of the queen and Fernão Trava was defeated at the battle of São Mamede by the barons, led by Afonso Henriques.

Teresa and the count were forced to leave the county in exile and apparently fled to Galicia. Fernão would begin a new stage of his life in the internal affairs of the kingdom of León-Castile, but not before re-establishing good relations with Afonso Henriques.⁸⁹ As for the fallen queen, there seems to be no surviving testimony of her last days on earth. The Portuguese countess-queen died in the 1st of November 1130 and the seed of independence she planted in the land she was forced to abdicate soon blossomed, and speeded into a remarkable process that transformed the old county of Portucale into the new kingdom of Portugal.

⁸⁷ See LIPSKEY (1972), p.55

⁸⁸ For a more detailed notion about the families involved, see e.g. MATTOSO (1985), pp. 62-83

⁸⁹ See MATTOSO (2007), pp. 94-95

Chapter 2 - Queen: the multiplicity of a title

The “queen” cannot separate herself from the “woman”. To be “queen” means also to be “woman”. But both are complex *constructus*. Language ensnares “woman” in a field of linguistic correspondents that conceive mental constructions which are known to the human experience. “Queen” naturally takes part in this web but it also has one of its own.

A queen-consort is the wife of a reigning king. She shares her husband’s social rank but normally not his political and military powers. Generally, she is said to have no power per se, even when her position is statutorily recognized. When a king is deceased, the queen-consort, now a widow, changes to queen-dowager. If her son ascends the throne, she can become queen-mother, a particular type of queen-dowager, who is simultaneously a former queen-consort and the mother of the current monarch. Queen-regent refers to the queen as substitute of an absent or incapacitated monarch, or even guardian of child-monarch, reigning temporarily in their name. The regency may be formed *ad hoc* or in concordance with a constitutional rule. Lastly, queen regnant possesses and exercises sovereign powers, ruling in her own right. Her authority, contrarily to that of a queen-consort and regent, is inherited. Accession of a female regnant occurs as a kingdom’s order of succession permits. Customarily, female inheritance occurs in the absence of direct male heirs, normally as a strategy to maintain the crown within the family.

The notion of a Queen or Queenship is more fluid than structured. “King’s Wife”, “King’s Mother”, “Royal Mistress” or “Lady” are all clear, if overlapping identities, and Queenly status is not simply expressed by the use of the well-known title of *regina* when sometimes it appears as no more than a diadem, not even a crown. “Queen” is more blurred. Are they queens because they exercise power individually,

and thus seen as consecrated persons and office holders? Or is the title a mere formality marking the subordination of a wife to her husband, the king? Where does their sovereignty lie?

The titles bestowed upon Mary in the eleventh century New Minster Missal's preface for the feast of the Conception – "Mundi domina, celi regina, sponsa Christi et unici filii Dei foeta mater"⁹⁰ – mirror those of the eleventh century Anglo-Saxon queens. The many faces of Mary were the many faces of the queen as well. The cult of the Virgin from the fifth century onwards and the progressive construction of her queenly status can be seen as enhancements of queenly office. This multiplicity of titles, reinforced by images of the Church as an enthroned and crowned queen, and representations of the Virgin Mary as Queen-Mother with her royal Son, embodied a paradigm.⁹¹

On one hand, the queen's image was confined to the feminine paragon of moral and social perfection, a role of female submission to and dependent on male authority. On the other, this demanded the absence of the "woman" itself since her queenship on heaven was the consequence of her submission on earth. But this submission was to God and not to her husband Joseph. Besides, the Virgin was associated with her Son not only in the salvation of the whole human race but in His eternal rule for this Queen of Heaven was her Son's spouse as well as His mother, enjoying an unique position of dignity and power to which no man could aspire. This dual position in relation to Christ made her an ideal model for queens, as wives and mothers of kings. The application of such model elevated their role while differentiating it from the male rulers, with

⁹⁰ "Lady of the World, queen of Heaven, bride of Christ and fruitful mother of the only Son of God". See STAFFORD (2001), p. 55; *Domina* can also be translated as "mistress". See TURNER and MOELLER apud CLAYTON (2003), *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, p.83.

⁹¹ See Chapter 3.

particular emphasis on the womanly, and thus queenly, virtues of mercy, benevolence, kindness and mediation between the king and the people.

Nonetheless, the kingdom of heaven provided ideals but not straightforwardly role-models and yet the eleventh century Winchester scribe who described Mary under those titles had a living English queen to whom he could look up to: Emma Æelgifu. Moreover, the titles used here (ones more than others) are frequently used to described not only English queens but from other countries as well from the eleventh to the sixteen century.⁹² The titles are dominant scripts which set the parameters of the parts which queens had to play. Moreover, roles are social and context governed and titles are archetypes which convey the powers and vulnerabilities of the female ruler as Lady, Wife, Mother and Queen. As for our two Iberian queens we decided to focus only on the titles which they effectively used, each with their own messages and dimensions of power and authority. For Urraca we shall attend to *regina* and *domina* as well as *imperatrix*; for Teresa, *regina* alone.

2.1. Emma, “the Lady”

Let us now look first into the Anglo-Saxon culture and Emma’s case. *Domina* (lady or mistress), *regina* (Queen) and *mater regis* (king’s mother): Mary’s identities were the queen’s identities. Another title, *conlaterana regis* (she who is at the king’s side), is also attached to queens, although not addressed to evoke Mary, Queen of Heaven, particularly. But then again, Mary was involved in a litany imagery which made her slid over contradictions and problems.⁹³ Such is inferred in images where she

⁹² These time barriers are discussed in PENN (2013), Alicia, *Queenship: A Study of What it was to be a Queen in Europe during the 11th-16th Centuries*, Department of History senior seminar thesis paper, Western Oregon University. Available online at «<http://digitalcommons.wou.edu/his>»

⁹³ For instance, Mary was the ever-virgin bride of Christ; the queen could not relegate her role in the king’s bed. Performing the sexual act was necessary, even if it was only to produce offspring which

appears beside Christ and God, as their ally and supporter, in assemblies of saints, or in Judgment Day. These four titles combined much of what Mary represented and what the earthly queens did. The queen had to be a “lady” of the world, a mortal “queen” of heaven, “mother” of the mortal “Christ”, the king, and/or of his children, and his bride.

The Anglo-Saxons had no tradition of a queen regnant, only the “king’s wife”. “The Lady”, in Old English *seo hlæfdige*, was the title used to describe Emma’s arrival in England in 1002 - “The Lady Richard’s daughter came hither” - , and at her death in 1052 - “In this year died Ælfgifu the Lady”.⁹⁴ It should be noted though that the documentation from tenth century onwards is mostly dominated by Wessex historiography.⁹⁵ Other kingdoms probably had different terms to address the king’s wife but we have not found evidences to elaborate let alone speculate any further.

There is little information concerning Emma prior to her arrival to England, which makes extremely difficult to find any details about her “norman” titles (if she had any), before becoming queen.⁹⁶ At the beginning of the eleventh century in England, “The Lady”/*seo hlæfdige* was used by women whose consecration was not in doubt. There is no precise reference to Emma’s consecration but she is shown crowned in the manuscript of the *Encomium*; in the *Liber Vitae*, she appears anointed and exhibiting a

would legitimize her status and guarantee the perpetuation of the bloodline. Yet, sexuality and the relationship between the bodies of king and queen were part of the private sphere not the public. At the eyes of the kingdom, the queen remained “pure” and “untouched”.

⁹⁴ Cf ASC, MS E, s.a.1002, p.134; MS D s.a. 1052, p.176. It was common to address Emma as simply “the Lady”. See examples in ASC, MS E, s.a 1013, MS D s.a 1022, MS C s.a. 1034, MS D s.a. 1035; *Diplomaticum anglicum aevi saxonici*, p. 577 (Will of Thurstan) and p. 586-87.

⁹⁵ Æthelstan, son of Edward the Elder, unified the kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia in 924. He also inherited the authority over the Welsh kings from his father Edward and aunt Æthelflæd. He achieved lordship in northern Britain by annexing the kingdom of Northumbria in 926 and conquering the last Viking kingdom of York in 927, making him the first English king of the Anglo-Saxon peoples, a *rex anglorum*. See ASC, C, D, E, F, s.a. 924, s.a. 926 and s.a. 927.

⁹⁶ See “Chapter 1: Three queens, three lives” of this thesis.

diadem granted by the heavens.⁹⁷ “The Lady” and “lady” are by no means the one and the same. Emma is the only queen in which *seo* precedes *hlæfdige*.⁹⁸ Should this be an indication of a consecration? *Hlæfdige* alone had already been used by female rulers;⁹⁹ *seo* apparently works as a nominative. In Æthelred’s reign, Emma was rarely a presence in the documentation. It is impossible to determine if she was even a *hlæfdige* let alone a *seo hlæfdige*. But the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle always refers to her as “the Lady”, which means that at the time Emma was included in the accounts, her reputation had already been developed and strengthened.

The use of the definite article particularizes her and makes her unique. At Cnut’s side and during the reign of her two sons, she made a name for herself apart from the reputation and ambitions made for her; *hlæfdige* was a lesser and poor title to a woman whose importance as a living bond between cultures and family interests had been the central purpose of her life. “The Lady” is Emma’s queenly title by choice and it encompasses not only “lady” as in *domina*, but a wife, not a subject, not submitted to the king, but partaker in the king’s status, a mother, *a mater regis*, and a Queen who was undoubtedly anointed and consecrated. The title was taken into a higher level because of the charged political context and Cnut and Emma’s personal ambitions.

The first undoubted association between *hlæfdige*, “Lady” and “queen” comes from the kingdom of Mercia, and dates from early tenth-century. It is difficult to

⁹⁷ For further discussion on this subject, see Chapter 3.

⁹⁸ This is only visible in the reign of Cnut.

⁹⁹ Æthelflæd of Mercia is the most well known case. She was the eldest daughter of Alfred the Great, wife of Æthelred of Mercia and sister of Edward the Elder. After her husband’s death in 911, she ruled Mercia until her death in 918 and was proclaimed *Myrcna hlæfdige*, “Lady of the Mercians”. See e.g. ASC, MS C, s.a. 913 and MS E, s.a. 918.; For an Old English account, see e.g. MS B: Cotton Tiberius A.vi, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, An Electronic edition*, Vol. 2, literary edition (1996-2006), s.a. 912 and 913. Available online at <<http://asc.jebbo.co.uk/b/b-L.html>>.

determine the same relationship between the terms for Wessex prior to that date.¹⁰⁰ However, the Latin accounts based on vernacular documents translated *hlæfdige* as *domina*, not *regina*, whilst *cwen*, from which modern English “queen” derives, is translated *regina* or means king’s wife.¹⁰¹

The association between *domina* and *hlæfdige* and both with “Lady” is not deprived of logic. *Hlæfdige* has its root in the Old English *hlāf*, meaning “bread” or “loaf”. The person who supplied it became known as *hlāf-weard*, “keeper (or guardian) of bread”.¹⁰² Later it became *hlaflord* and further shortened to “lord” in the thirteen century. As for his female counterpart, it developed in a similar manner: *dige* comes from an Old English word that meant “to knead”. So the “bread-kneader” was as important as her husband, because she was responsible for making the household’s loaves.¹⁰³ As Stafford explains, in England, a *hlæfdige* was one who commanded servants, ruled a household or a family. All the uses of the word *hlaflord* fill *hlæfdige* with potential, the same with *dominus* and *domina*: lord of a people, a house, a land, of area, of servants; master, owner or proprietor, and ruler. Consequently, *domina* was

¹⁰⁰ In Wessex, it is almost certain though that the title *hlæfdige* applied to the king’s wife is not prior to the ninth-century. It is not written as such until Emma’s time; the form varies between *hlæfdigan* or *hlæfdiga* but it is certainly applied to the king’s wife and/or mother. See e.g. *Diplomaticum, Will of Ælfgifu*, p. 553-554, *Will of Byrhttric and Ælfswyth*, p. 502. King Alfred the Great’s wife Ealhswith is called “Lady of the English”, *dominam Anglorum*, in the Latin poem *Metrical Calendar of Hampson* dated from c. 902, but it is not possible to determine its Old English equivalent.

¹⁰¹ See examples of *Cwen* in the Old English version of BEDE (1999), *Ecclesiastical history of the English people*, Old English Series, translated by Thomas Miller, Cambridge, Ontario, Parenthesis Publications or in the poem *Beowulf*. See PHILLIPS (2012), Charles, “A Feminist critique of Beowulf: Women as Peace-Weavers and Goaders in Beowulf’s courts”, *Theses; dissertations and capstones*, Marshall University, Marshall Digital Scholar pp. 17, 23. Available online at [«http://mds.marshall.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1297&context=etd»](http://mds.marshall.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1297&context=etd) See also ASC MS A s.a. 672, 737 or 888

¹⁰² Bread played an important role in Anglo-Saxon times. Bread, cheese, beer and butter were precious to the community. See STAVES (2005), Ruth, *A Companion to Beowulf*, London, Greenwood Press, p. 117.

¹⁰³ See entries for “loaf”, “lord”, and “lady” in the *Online Etymology Source*. Available at [«http://www.etymonline.com/sources.php»](http://www.etymonline.com/sources.php)

glossed *materfamilias*, “mother of a community”, and the first female of the family, lady of *hlæfeata*, of followers. All words connected to the notion of provision, making and acceptance of *hlaf*/loaf and means of subsistence.¹⁰⁴

Overall, lady/*hlæfdige* was the mistress of a household. By the tenth century it carried meanings of nobility and exercise of power, and *domina* was linked by then to high status. Queens were in a sense the highest members of the nobility, just as lord described king. And yet *domina* was not necessarily the female equivalent of *dominus*; *domina*/*hlæfdige*/lady not necessarily meant a wife. The title *domina* describes a woman’s power, even her independence from her husband.

The relationship between *domina* and *hlæfdige* can already be found in the eighth-century.¹⁰⁵ The implications of such class meanings which could cut through gender bring contradictions for the power and authority of the queen. *Hlæfdige* applied to the king’s wife in ninth-century Wessex may be a term originally denoting a lesser queenly status, or even a lower one. We know that the West Saxons under King Alfred did not allow the king’s wife to be called *regina*.¹⁰⁶ This statement was perhaps Alfred’s strategy to undermine his wife Ealhswith and the claims of her son Edward the Elder. And yet Alfred was certainly too aware of the standing of royalty to allow the drop to be a large one. What title was used remains untold, but *hlæfdige* serves as a candidate. Edward would ultimately arise to the throne and the usage of the title “lady” as in *domina* applied to a king’s wife dates from his reign (A.D. 899–924), associated with

¹⁰⁴ See STAFFORD (2001), p. 58.

¹⁰⁵ See THORPE (1831), Benjamin, “Paenitentiale Ecgberhti”, Liber II, 4, in *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England Comprising Laws Enacted Under the Anglo-Saxon Kings from Aethelbirht to Cnut*, London, Lightning Source Lt, pp. 184-185.

¹⁰⁶ “For the nation of the West Saxons does not allow the queen to sit beside the king, nor to be called queen, but only the king’s wife.” See ASSER (1906), *Life of King Alfred*, translated by Albert S. Cook, Boston, New York, Ginn & company, p. 8. [digitalized in 2007 by Internet Archive]. Available online at <<https://archive.org/stream/asserslifeofking>>

his interest in stressing his mother's status and the beginning of the widest aspirations of tenth-century Wessex kingship to rule all the English. Ealhswith becomes the first "dear (or true) lady of the English",¹⁰⁷ but the term *hlæfdige* is never applied to her, at least not directly.

"Lady" becomes consequently a *domina*, mistress of the household and partaker in the king's status as "the most noble of nobles".¹⁰⁸ Moreover, it is a title associated with holding lands. In fact, Anglo-Saxon law allowed women to inherit, devise, purchase or sell lands. From all the types of land holding, *Bookland* was the most valuable for it allowed the division and alienation of estates.¹⁰⁹ It conferred to the owner certain judicial rights and obligations as well as the right to explore the territories and recover its economic profit. Emma's use of the title *domina* in Latin documental is rare. We have only found one reference where *domina* serves as synonym to *hlæfdige*. The writ is dated c. A.D. 1035 from Cnut's reign. Emma is the king's witness in the granting of Folkestone, Kent, to Christ Church, Canterbury. She is "Ælgyua Imma domina", a translation from the Old English text where she appears as "Ælfgyua Imma seo hlæfdige".¹¹⁰ If this is the only case, both in Æthelred's reign and Cnut, we were not able to determine. However, some conclusions can be drawn from it. Firstly, the two titles are used as equivalents not opposites. Secondly, *seo hlæfdige* is the same as "the Lady" and both are linked to *domina*. Finally and most importantly, the title in Latin is

¹⁰⁷ In the *MCH* (Metrical calendar of Hampton) Ealhswith is called "dominam Anglorum Ealhswythe caram (or veram). See *CalendHampson* in "Ealhswith", *Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England*. Available online at <<http://www.pase.ac.uk/jsp/DisplayPerson.jsp?personKey=2726>>

¹⁰⁸ STAFFORD (2001), p. 59.

¹⁰⁹ *Leanland*, *Folkland* and *Bookland*. The first two were forms of lesser estates. *Leanland* was land held by lease; *Folkland* represented land of communal obligations. For a more detailed explanation, see CLARCK (1995), Christine, *Women's Rights in Early England*, Brighton, Young University Law review, p. 211.

¹¹⁰ *S 981*, Canterbury, Christ Church. Available online at <<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/981.html>>

applied in a context where land property is discussed. Land property and *domina* are thus unquestionably connected.

Emma was granted with several estates throughout her life but obviously she did not supervise them herself. *Domina/hlæfdige* “commanded servants”. In A.D. 1003 Manuscripts F and E of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Emma is named “Lady of Exeter”. The Chroniclers’ account of Hugh’s (“a French fellow”) failure to protect Exeter reveals him to be reeve of the city, appointed by the Lady herself. So Hugh was Emma’s personal choice to supervise and administer the Exeter domain in her name.¹¹¹ The queen had other servants to whom she granted lands¹¹² but who bequeathed what to her is difficult to determine. Still, on other occasions, Emma was on the receiving end. For example, in Leofgifu’s will, dated from c. A.D.1040, Emma is granted with land at Belchamp¹¹³ or the estate is returned to her. Leofgifu addresses the queen as “her lady”, and the will’s opening form is solemnly directed to the queen. This suggests that her duty and allegiance was first to the Lady and to her alone. The will is specific: Emma is “my lady” or “her lady” whilst the king is neither “my lord” nor “her lord”.¹¹⁴ Another one from A.D. 1051 confirms that she had held jurisdiction over Kirby, Norfolk, through her servant (*cniht* or *knhit*) Leofstan.¹¹⁵ She was also *domina* of eight and a half hundreds of Thingoe¹¹⁶ in Suffolk, later passed on to the monastery of Bury St Edmund

¹¹¹ ASC, MS E and F, s.a. 1003.

¹¹² Emma’s servants and followers are listed in STAFFORD (2001), pp. 320-322.

¹¹³ Belchamp is located in the county of Essex, land undoubtedly associated with the queen, as previously mentioned.

¹¹⁴ See *Will of Leofgifu S 1521* A.D. 1035 x44.

¹¹⁵ *S 1706*. After the death of Leofstan, King Edward declared that the estate should be returned as fully and completely to his mother, Emma.

¹¹⁶ Thingoe was one of the smallest hundreds (a division measure) of Suffolk.

when Edward, the Confessor, deprived her of her lands in 1043.¹¹⁷ A charter dated from c.1053 confirms that Aelfric, son of Withgar, had administered them for Emma.¹¹⁸

It is clear that Emma exercised power within her domains. She had free will in the sense that no other authority was recognized in those lands but hers. She managed them in the way she thought it served her best interests and appointed people in whom she trusted to do her bidding. The king was bound by law and tradition to not interfere unless he felt personally threatened.¹¹⁹

From the three queens discussed in our work, Emma had one title which was exclusively hers and she wore it during her married time to Æthelred. The usage of *Conlaterana regis*, (“she who is at the king’s side”) is very specific to the Anglo-Saxon world. There is no precise equivalent in Old English; its implications were perhaps covered by *hæfdige*. This particular variation of the title specifies the queen as partner, adviser of her husband, with important functions in the management of the household. Its meaning extends beyond the condition of *coniunx*/wife or *legitima coniunx*/legitimate wife and yet it combines sexual partner and household mistress in a contradictory script.

The wife as the king’s bedfellow expresses an intimate condition with the king’s body, and therefore legitimizes the woman as queen. But it is in itself a statement about

¹¹⁷ See *S 1069*. Emma might have received those lands as a “bridal gift” from Cnut. She also held lands at Mildehall, according to the same charter.

¹¹⁸ See *S 1078*. See also STAFFORD (2004), pp. 112-113 for more details on the queen’s service and household.

¹¹⁹ Edward deprived his mother of “an incredible amount of gold and silver”. See *ASC*, MS C and E s.a 1043. MS D confirms that Emma’s treasure was “innumerable”. After two fruitful marriages and a career as queen and queen mother, Emma’s wealth made her liable to the deprivation of land, which was an attack specifically on a dowager who had attempted to retain lands beyond her widow’s status. See STAFFORD (1997), p. 12.

the limited status of a queen by labeling her as sexual partner,¹²⁰ which was the less powerful, or the least acceptable, even least legitimate face of power for it represented the reality of her sex. The sexual queen was a bad woman, not even acknowledged as queen.¹²¹ Then why address her with a title that has the ever-present implicitness to sexuality and to the sexual act? Sexual favor was not necessarily the basis of her power because the queen was far from the sole potential partner of a king. And yet it was needed to produce heirs to the throne. The act of consecration helped in stating the queen as the king's *legitima coniunx* which suggests that through this blessing, the consummation of the sexual act, and thus, the recognition of her sexuality and of her intimate relation to the body of the monarch was acknowledged. It is interesting to consider this, especially if we think about Emma's designation as *thoro consecrate regis* in a charter dated immediately before the one of 1005 in which Edward, her first son with Æthelred, appears as witness.¹²²

In addition, the distinction between the feminine body and the royal body (woman versus queen) was fundamental, following a separation between the public/kingdom and the private/family sphere. The relation of two rulers should be

¹²⁰ The title of *conlaterana* was previously used by Ælfthryth, Emma's mother-in-law and Edgar's third wife. The birth of a son, Edmund, in c. 966, brought concerns with the legitimacy of the marriage and future claims of inheritance. See *S 745* for the "*legitima prefati regis coniuncx*". Furthermore, the usage of such title only in her consecration year (973) demarks that it was necessary to stress that it was a royal bedfellow who was being consecrated, a statement to limit her status and power as queen. However, Ælfthryth continued to witness mostly as *regina* and *mater regis*, and no other indication of *conlaterana* appears in the attestations. See the Table of *Attestations of queens and athelings during the reign of King Aethelred the Unready*, tables 979-984, 987-995. Available online in <http://www.kemble.asnc.cam.ac.uk/node/31>

¹²¹ See "Auctore B: Vita Sancti Dunstani", *Memorials of Saint Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury* (1874), edited by William Stubbs, London, Longman & CO, pp. 32-33: she is "*inepta tamen mulier...ignominiosa...regum libellis Jezebel...*". Available online at <https://archive.org/stream/memorialssaintd00stubgoog#page/n175/mode/2up>

¹²² See *S 909*. Available online at <http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/909.html>

different from the relation of two bodies. From all aspects of wifely status, the bedfellow provided ammunition for attacks on queens if they were ever found guilty of lacking an acceptable public face. The primal level of the union needed to remain in the shadows, relegating and confining the “real woman” to the chambers. However, the title also compassed such sexual dimension which could at any time be appropriated to degrade the queen and limiting her power. However, some aspects of a wife’s status could be recognized: those in the household, and the power of the woman who stood at the king’s side. In the private household it is almost impossible to attest, but in the royal household, it is evident the particular usage of the title applied to Emma in the records of land transactions and grants where the queen appears as witness and advocator of the occurrence because she is married to the king and mother of his children.¹²³

Motherhood was more likely to be acknowledged as a suitable description of the queen’s public power. Virginity was considered to be its previous stage, a time of virtue and preparations for marriage, that is to say, for the central and most important stage in the life of a woman – reproduction. Albeit the negative imagery constructed by lawmakers and philosophers, marriage was thought as a cure for sin and an instrument of procreation. Though this mentality shows signs of becoming part of the collective mentality of the feudal society at the turn of the twelfth century, the ultimate statement of a queen’s sex and gender was fulfilling her role as royal vessel, for the glory of the kingdom, king and her own.

¹²³ See *S 902, S 915, S 918* in «<http://www.esawyer.org.uk>»; Cross information with the years of 1002, 1007, 1008 and 1011 in *the List of attestations of queens and aethelings during the reign of King Aethelred the Unready*; During the reign of Cnut, the usage of the title appears during grants of land to the Abingdon Abbey and its abbot, Siward, in 1032 and 1033 respectively. See *S 964 and S 967* in *The List of (...)*. Cross reference with the *Attestations of queens and aethelings during the reigns of Cnut, Harald and Harthacnut*, regarding those same years.

Fertility naturally rose above virginity because queens were never just pregnant, nor a mere mother: they were the matrix of future kings. Choosing the bride of a king was an investment, not only in a queen but also in a woman who would give heirs to the throne and perpetuate the blood line.¹²⁴ Pregnancy time was associated with fertility cults and blood claims, making the woman something of a fertility figure herself. It was also a time of wonder and enigma. The womb was regarded as a symbol of continuity, beginning and end, life and death, a passage between two worlds, the mystic and the material; the child *in utero* was its messenger.¹²⁵ Ancient tribal traditions corroborate motherhood status as the zenith of women's power¹²⁶ and pregnancy was the ultimate proof of her sex and role. When queen, her blood conferred sovereignty; in her womb rested the realm's survival and integrity.¹²⁷

The notion of an official status is more clearly recognized in the title *regina*/queen, the title charter scribes of Cnut regularly gave to Emma. During

¹²⁴ See PARSONS (1993), John Carmi, "Introduction: Family, Sex and Power", *Medieval Queenship*, New York, St. Martin's Press, pp. 4-5.

¹²⁵ Society projected onto queen's bodies and childbirth hopes and anxieties that were sexual as well as political. The desire for a strong and healthy male offspring and perpetuation of royal lineage depended also on the king's virtue to perform his duty, but more on the queen, whose ability to bear a lawful heir to the throne was the primary reason for her presence in the monarch's life and in the realm. For the queen's role during pregnancy and motherhood, see PARSONS (1996), "The Pregnant Queen as counsellor and the medieval construction of Motherhood", *Medieval Mothering*, edited by John Carmi Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler, New York and London, Garland Publishing, Inc., especially pp. 43-47.

¹²⁶ "(...) the matriarch of a tribe (...) was the priestess or royal woman whose blood conferred sovereignty. From her descendants might be drawn the rulers of the tribe." MATTHEWS (1989), Caitlin, *Arthur and the Sovereignty of Britain. King and Goddess in the Mabinogion*, Arkana, pp. 274-276.

¹²⁷ The heirs and queen would appear in relation to the king's body, forming thus an undying body linked across generations by blood. Inheritance and the fear of political crisis demanded queens to appear on the charters and in the witness lists when a male heir was born and added to the royal bloodline. Their status was enhanced when becoming mothers of a future king. See e.g. Emma's first appearance as *regina* in the *Codex diplomaticus aevi Saxonici* in the year of 1005, when Æthelred II recognizes Edward as his heir by Emma and bequeaths him propriety. This is confirmed by the *list of attestations of queens and aethelings* (Table 995-1005).

Æthelred's reign, from the eleven charters where Emma makes an appearance, four gave her the title of *regina* against six of *conlaterana*.¹²⁸ Truly, with Cnut, Emma's presence in royal charters rose exponentially: from twenty-three, she is enlisted as *regina* in nineteen of them; the remaining four register her as *conlaterana* (3) or *consacrata* (1).¹²⁹ From 1018-19 she signs after or between archbishops;¹³⁰ from then on she is after the king or jointly associated in grants with him.¹³¹

Regina corresponds roughly to *rex* the same way that *domina* to *dominus*. If Lady meant class title, *conlaterana regis* wife of king and mother of the king's children, then *regina* was perhaps her official status. It might denote a similar formal inauguration but it remains doubtful whether *regina* implied consecration and office. *Cwen* is the closest Old English equivalent to "queen" and it was normally used to denote the king's wife or to couple queen with king.¹³² But its few usages do not give certainties as in what *cwen* meant let alone *regina* to contemporaries.

¹²⁸ The remaining two is where she is addressed as *thoro consecrata regis* and another where she is the sole beneficiary and no other than her name is given. See S 925. Available online at «<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/925.html>»

¹²⁹ S 955 and S 956. See *Attestations of queens and æthelings during the reigns of Cnut*. Available online at «<http://www.kemble.asnc.cam.ac.uk/node/31>»

¹³⁰ See for e.g S 950, S 952 and S 955.

¹³¹ S 958, S 960, S 962, S 967, S 968, S 974 ... ; S 970 and S 972 – "Ego Cnut rex Anglorum cum regina mea Ælfgyfu propriam donationem" ("I Cnut King of the English confirm this donation with my queen Ælfgyfu")

¹³² Its first appearance is attached to Seaxburh. She married Cenwath and reigned briefly after his death. ASC MS E defines Seaxburh as "*rixade his [Cenwath] cwen*", coupling her with the king. See MS E version in Old English in an online version available at «<http://asc.jebbo.co.uk/e-e-L.html>»; compare with the English translation, s.a. 672, p. 35; Later in 722 for Æthelburh of Wessex, wife of king Ine, who attacked Taunton - "*towearp Æpelburh cwen Tantun*" ("Queen Æthelburh destroyed Taunton"). See ASC, MS A and E, s.a. 722, pp. 42-43; In the late tenth and eleventh century, Abbot Ælfric relates *regina* to *cwen* and *rex* to *kyning* in his Old English *Glossary* (p. 300) and in *Grammar*, (p.24) Available online at «<https://archive.org/details/grammatik00aelfuoft>»

Regina is not prior to the tenth century. The first to ever use it was perhaps Eadgifu, sister of Edmund I.¹³³ But the first English queen to be certainly consecrated was Æthelryth, mother of Æthelred II, in 973, though she had been given the title before, at least in 964.¹³⁴ Edgar was inaugurated as king for the second time in 973 at Bath.¹³⁵ Like Edgar Æthelryth had already been anointed as queen at the time of her marriage.¹³⁶ The ceremony in 973 was towards her consecration.¹³⁷ But Æthelryth's role denote her as king's consort and bed companion, falling into the *conlaterana regis spectrum* more than into a position comparable to the king's, leaving unclear her connection in the share of the king's royal attributes and office.¹³⁸ This only adds more layers of doubt towards what *regina* meant. Therefore, even as Æthelryth appears in the witness-lists as *regina*, the consecration apparently did not transformed her status right away as the acquisition of kingship did that of a man.

Yet, the developing context of kingship naturally included enhancements of the queen's position as the king's consort. The increasing interest in Marian iconography in the reign of Edgar by English ecclesiastical circles, particularly in Mary as queen of

¹³³ *S* 477; As wife of French King Charles the Simple, Eadgifu was probably consecrated given that Frankish queens were so in the early tenth century. See STAFFORD (2001), pp. 63, 164; STAFFORD (1997), p.14

¹³⁴ Æthelryth was Edgar the Peaceful's third wife. MS D recorded their marriage in 965. "Eadgar cyning genam ælfðryðe him to cwen" ("In this year King Edgar took Æthelryth as his queen")

¹³⁵ *ASC*, s.a. 973, pp. 118 – 119. MS A celebrates this occurrence with a poem. MS E refers that six kings of Britain gave their allegiance to Edgar though other pledges were done by two more: the King of the Scots and the King of the Cumbrians. See KEYNES (2008), Simon, *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975 New Interpretations*, Suffolk, The Boydell Press, p. 50

¹³⁶ NELSON (1986), Janet, "Inauguration Rituals", *Politics and Ritual*, London, WBC printers, pp. 283-308

¹³⁷ NELSON (1986), "the Second English *Ordo*", pp. 361-370; STAFFORD (2001), pp. 61-63.; STAFFORD (1997), p. 13

¹³⁸ For more on Æthelryth, see YORKE (2008), Barbara, "The women in Edgar's life" in *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975 New Interpretations*, pp. 143-157.

heaven, might have contributed to an enhancement in queenship.¹³⁹ Images of Mary from late tenth-century and early eleventh century show her crowned; she was a queen.¹⁴⁰ Therefore, when Emma arrives at the Anglo-Saxon court, traditions were growing, precedents were had been progressively opened and the formal role of the English queen was gaining new grounds of power and status.¹⁴¹

Emma was crowned Queen in 1002 and “consecrated to the royal bed”¹⁴². The troubled times from 1013-1017 of ravaging, punitive tribute and internal strain and division, including the exile of a consecrated king and family, saw the queen as a sharer of rule and as an intercessor for peace and prosperity, much like the role Mary had been obtaining during the past century.¹⁴³ Emma’s second consecration and coronation alongside Cnut in 1017 expresses this. It emphasizes their rule as king and queen, a partnership and association of the Queen in the king’s rule, and the relationship of the queen as well as the king and to the English people. As the widow of an English king and already consecrated before, she stood for unity and continuity. The consecration rite and Emma’s high profile during Cnut’s reign was perhaps the product of political circumstances but gave the title of *regina* new contexts.¹⁴⁴ For the first time it gave the idea of equality and lordship of king and queen together expressed in the making of the marriage. But its formalization also brought out Queenship.¹⁴⁵

Alongside Cnut, other aspects of Emma’s personae and of the Anglo-Saxon culture of the eleventh century must be brought into our attention, specifically

¹³⁹ For more on the idea of Mary in the Anglo-Saxon culture see CLAYTON (2002), Mary, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

¹⁴⁰ See YORKE (2008), pp. 147 – 148; STAFFORD (1997), pp. 13-14; CLAYTON (2002), “Chapter 6: The Virgin as portrayed in Anglo-Saxon Art”, pp. 142-178

¹⁴¹ See STAFFORD (2001), pp. 165 – 178.

¹⁴² *S 909* “thoro consacrata regis”.

¹⁴³ See STAFFORD (2001), pp. 175-176

¹⁴⁴ STAFFORD (2001), p. 184

¹⁴⁵ STAFFORD (2001), p. 185.

concerning notions of empire and respective titles: *imperator* and *imperatrix*. Firstly, it should be noted that Empire could indicate not only the exercise of power in a formal way but informal as well. It could be a question of occupation or annexation (formal sovereignty), or of control (effective sovereignty).¹⁴⁶ The notion of “informal empire” does not imply an annexation *per se* but rather possessing *imperium* over a variety of individuals; sovereignty *de facto*, by the establishment of commercial, ideological, dynastic, or conquest relations. Anglo-Saxon England lived under a similar situation during the Heptarchy (6th century to 10th century)¹⁴⁷. Even before Edgar’s unification in c. 958 there was a certain cohesion and politic union in the territory.¹⁴⁸ The authority they had can be denoted from the titles they wore which are recorded in the codices and

¹⁴⁶ We were not able to find any roman examples but these two forms of powers can be found in Ancient Greece. The Delian League is mostly the standard explanation of this occurrence. The existence of a common ethnos was a frequent justification used by Athens to maintain hegemony over the remaining League members. In spite of being independent in name, Athenian allies underwent subjection to an empire - an informal empire, controlled, in the establishment of an imperial relationship with Athens. See HALL (2009), Jonathan M., “Polis, Community and Ethnic Identity”, *The Cambridge Companion to Archaic Greece*, edited by A.H. Shapiro, Cambridge University Press, pp. 52-53; THUCYDIDES (1843), *History of the Peloponnesian War*, translated and edited by Thomas Hobbes, London. Available online at [«http://www.perseus.tufts.edu»](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu)

¹⁴⁷ The English Heptarchy is a collective name applied to the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms, conventionally identified as seven: Mercia, Sussex, Wessex, Kent, Essex, Northumbria and East Anglia. The kings contended for supremacy over the centuries, with Mercia and Wessex becoming those which would achieve a higher status than the rest. Successive rulers of Wessex would later consolidate the kingdoms into one in the 10th century. See *The Oxford History of Britain* (2010), edited by Kenneth O. Morgan, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.69-105; WALL (2015) Martin “Chapter 2: The Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy”, *the Anglo-Saxon Age: the Birth of England*, Stroud, the Hill.

¹⁴⁸ The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Beda’s *the Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (*Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*) mention kings like East Anglia’s king Rædwald in the 7th or the Mercian’s Offa and Ceolwulf in the 8th and 9th century who managed to control all or part of the remaining kingdoms. These rulers possessed *imperium* beyond their territories and were called *Breatwaldas*. See ASC, i.e. 823, 827 or 828, pp. 44-45. BEDA (1999), *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, translated by Thomas Miller, pp. 51-52; FANNING (1991), Steven. “Bede, *Imperium*, and the Bretwaldas.” *Speculum* 66, pp. 1–26.

laws – *rex Anglorum*, *basileus* and *imperator*. All of these designations were used almost randomly by Anglo-Saxon rulers, though *Rex Anglorum* was the most frequent.

The various titles were used by several kings. *The Florentii Wigorniensis monachi Chronicon ex chronicis* and *Codex diplomaticus aevi Saxonici* state Æthelstan as the first *rex Anglorum*. Variations of *rex Anglorum* are most common in all the codices and chronicles: *rex Anglorum et euragulus totius Bryttanniae* (Æthelstan), *Rex Anglonim gubernator et recto* (Eadred, in 949; Eadwig in 958; Æthelred II in 1002); *basileus* and *imperator* take on an identical designation: *totius Britanniae basileus*, *Anglorum basileus*, *Basileus Anglorum et imperator regum gentium*. Until Cnut's reign in 1017, *imperator* was used to name the “commander of the army”, closer to the original notion of *imperium* as the military power of an “emperor” or king. This can be verified in titles such *Basileus Anglorum et iimperator regilu gentiurn* and *Basileus, imperator et dominus* (by Eadgar, in 964), or *Famosus totius Brittannicae insulae imperator*.¹⁴⁹

In turn, *Imperium* named the territory under the ruler's control, and *imperator*, although still an honorific title linked to a victorious military command, became much attached to the *de facto* monarch.¹⁵⁰ Cnut wore the title of *imperator* from 1018 onwards.¹⁵¹ In his first official charter as English king, he identifies himself as “*Ego denique imperator Knuto, a Christi Rege regum regiminis Anglici in insula potitus*” justifying his authority as something of divine origin, since regal authority and power had been given to him by God.

¹⁴⁹ See *The Florentii Wigorniensis monachi Chronicon ex chronicis* and *Codex diplomaticus aevi Saxonici* on the following entries: “Eadred”, “Eadwig”, “Edgar”, “Æthelstan”, “Æthelred II”.

¹⁵⁰ See *Codex diplomaticus aevi Saxonici*, p. 211.

¹⁵¹ In this context, *imperator* is the one who rules an empire (emperor) and “empire” being a group of different territories and people under a single authority. See S 952. Available online in [«http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/952.html»](http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/952.html).

The use of *imperator* can very well still be an honorific, a victory title after his successful conquest of England. There were no prospects of an empire in early 1018 and Cnut had to strive for a good government, more importantly, to secure his new title and throne.¹⁵² Yet, the use of *imperator* can indicate his future aspirations and dreams but they were not remotely plausible at the time. Only in c. 1028 was he at the head of an “empire” which included territories along the North Sea: Norway, Denmark and England. The Empire of Cnut, later called as the North-Sea Empire or the Anglo-Scandinavian-Empire, was more a gathering of suzerainties than a unitary structure or a territory with a centralized “kingdom-core” (England).

Such “multicultural” domain implied respect for native traditions of each faction and their elites. The acknowledgement of the several dimensions of his suzerainty can be observed in the persistency in which the various crowns and peoples are enounced as separate entities, though unified: *Rex Anglorum et Danorum* (1018 to 1030), *rex Anglorum, Danorum et Norwegarum* (1030), and *rex Anglorum, Danorum, Norwegarum et partis Suenorum*.¹⁵³ These characteristics defined Cnut’s Empire as an

¹⁵² The death of Harald II of Norway, Cnut’s brother, which would only occur in 1019, allowed Cnut to reclaim the crown, annexing it to Denmark’s and England’s. See LARSON (1912), Laurence Marcellus, “Chapter VI – The Beginnings of Empire – 1019-1025”, *Canute the Great And the Rise of Danish Imperialism during the Viking Age*, edited by W.C. Davis, New York, The Knickerbocker Press, p.138. See also charter S 952.

¹⁵³ See *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi Chronicon ex chronicis*, pp. 181-185. About the second title, see THORPE (1831), “Leges Regis Cnuti”, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, p. 521. There is some controversy about the territory or people referred to as *Suenorum*. *Rex Anglorum, Danorum, Norwegarum et partis Suenorum* is a form of salutation supposedly used by Cnut in a letter addressed to the English people dated 1027. But there are no contemporary records of it, and documents or chronicles as the *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi Chronicon ex chronicis* are from a later time. “Suenorum” is commonly translated as “Swedish” but the existence of a Swedish territory and frontiers is not prior to late 11th century. As King of Denmark, Cnut inherited pretensions to considerable stretches of the south Baltic shore lands, and consequently could claim to rule a part of the Slavic lands. These arguments suggest that an association with Sweden is most likely an error in translation or interpretation. More on this subject in

“informal” one, where control was maintained through a certain degree of influence over other regions, the sustentation of a military sea fleet, coinage, and with the delegation of power to others who responded to the central core, but without actually exercising the core’s authority. Norway, Denmark and remaining territories were independent in name but not in “nature”. The same happened with Ireland, Wales, Scotland and the territory which is now Poland.

There are no records to prove that the English queen had military power while Cnut lived. But when the Danish conqueror died in 1036, and a dynastic crisis ensued, Emma, with the help of Earl Godwin, her “most faithful supporter”,¹⁵⁴ assumed the role of regent and sat in Winchester. From there, she gained control over the royal treasure and attained the support of the housecarls (or house-carles), “the king’s guard”,¹⁵⁵ controlling Wessex, core of the kingdom, as Harthacnut’s share, opposing Harold’s claims and slowing down his progress for some time. The supposed legitimate heir to the English throne was away in Denmark. Oath, money and privileges probably kept this elite guard allied to the family of their former sire. If they responded personally to the queen or to another that is not known. Better said, it is impossible to determine if it was Emma or to a councillor like Godwine to whom they swore obedience, or even if they were truly loyal. Still, it seems that Emma had some form of informal or effective power over this military group until her exile.

If *conlaterana regis* was a title which exemplified sharing *status*, making the queen an extension of the king’s body, and although Emma was styled as *conlaterana*

LARSON (1912), “Chapter VI – The Beginnings of Empire – 1019-1025”, *Canute the Great and the Rise of Danish Imperialism During the Viking Age*, pp. 137-162.

¹⁵⁴ See ASC, MS E in 1036, p. 161

¹⁵⁵ See ASC, MS E in 1036. See also STAFFORD (2001), pp. 237-239. Housecarls were personal troops in service of someone, more specifically a group of mercenaries who functioned as an organized guild. They were free men, received regular wages and fulfilled both military and administrative roles. For more on the subject, see LARSON (1912), pp. 153-171.

regis only during Æthelred's reign, that *status* could not simply go away when she married Cnut. It became part of her queenly *personae*. Following this line of thought, and using a deductive logic supported by the ideas and arguments previously stated and discussed, Emma was also entitled to share Cnut's imperial claim. Cnut possessed military *imperium* but he also had an "informal empire"; the first is associated to war as a trait of the masculine sex, and the second to the annexation of crowns (Norway, Denmark and England). As Larson confirms, Cnut's position was truly imperial because "he held in his hands the destinies of two great regions; the British Isles and the Scandinavian peninsulas. His fleet all but controlled two important seas, the North and the Baltic. He had built an empire"¹⁵⁶, which would theoretically made him *Imperator* as in "Emperor"¹⁵⁷. Therefore, Emma, as an extension of Cnut, being the emperor's wife, would be *Imperatrix* as in "empress" [consort]. Their share in rule makes Emma *regina Anglorum*, in 1019, *regina Anglorum et Danorum*, later *regina Anglorum, Danorum et Norwegarum*, and finally *regina Anglorum, Danorum, Norwegarum et partis Suenorum*.

During Harthacnut's reign and in the first years of Edward's, Emma's status changed once more. It was normal for an Anglo-Saxon *regina* to be called a king's mother (*mater regis*) after the death of her husband and accession of her son. The role of mother was even more likely to be acknowledged as a suitable description of the queen's public power. Emma ruled alongside her sons in 1040-42, much like her mother-in law Æthelryth, and before her, Eadgifu, third wife of Edward the Elder, mother of Kings Edmund I and Eadred.¹⁵⁸ Eadgifu was prominent during the reign of

¹⁵⁶ See LARSON (1912), p. 257

¹⁵⁷ LARSON (1912), p. 324

¹⁵⁸ As explained in Chapter 1, Æthelryth was queen – dowager from the beginnings of Æthelred's reign until her death in c. 1002.

her two sons signing right after them in almost all charters.¹⁵⁹ She disappeared from court during her grandson Eadwig's reign but some of her lands were returned to her by her youngest grandson, King Edgar, when he succeeded his brother.¹⁶⁰ The first record of Æthelryth as *mater regis* is in the 980s.¹⁶¹ It is consistent with date given to Æthelred's marriage with Ælfgifu of York.¹⁶² Æthelryth began her new career as the King's mother after he wed. Unlike Ælfgifu, who was never crowned or anointed and never signed charters, Æthelryth regularly figures in witness-lists, most of the time between the most important clerical figures of the time (Dunstan and Oswald), or even before them; sometimes right after the king.¹⁶³

A widowed queen with a son who was king was more entitled to be the king's mother than queen. And kings were happier with this acceptable face of female power, perhaps more than the power of a man's wife. But this was not unproblematic for royal women as a foundation of power. Emma ruled alongside Harthacnut from 1040-42; Edward was associated to the throne in 1041 but was not king until his brother's death.¹⁶⁴ Harthacnut never married and seems that he relied on his mother to guide him through England's customs. In fact, Emma had already a great career and years of expertise in kingdom's affairs and politics, whilst Harthacnut had spent most of his life in Denmark.¹⁶⁵ From the five charters from his reign, Emma signs right after the king in

¹⁵⁹ Eadgifu is present in almost all known charters from Edmund I and Eadred's reigns. To attest, see from *S* 470 to *S* 578 (AD 940- AD 951).

¹⁶⁰ *S* 745 and *S* 746. Both grants are related to New Minster, Winchester, strongly linked as some of the "queen's lands". For a list of the lands, see STAFFORD (2001), pp. 129-130

¹⁶¹ The earliest one dates from A.D. 981. *S* 838 – "Ego Æthelryth eiusdem regis mater"

¹⁶² See WILLIAMS (2003), Ann., *Æthelred the Unready: the Ill-Counselled King*, London, Bath Press, p.24

¹⁶³ See for e.g. *S* 838 for the first occurrence; *S* 841 for the second; *S* 844 and *S* 876 for the third.

¹⁶⁴ On Edward's, Harthacnut's and Emma's rule see Chapter 3 "Image Representation".

¹⁶⁵ See Chapter 1 of this work.

three,¹⁶⁶ one other is a confirmation of a granting done in Cnut's time¹⁶⁷ and another is issued jointly by mother and son jointly.¹⁶⁸

During the first two years of Edward the Confessor's reign, Emma did not lose her status as queen– mother,¹⁶⁹ nor her lands and influence. But in the two following years she progressively disappears from charters altogether and is substituted by Edith. Her last appearances are confined to witness-lists concerning grants to Old Minster or Westminster abbey, that belonged to the “Queen's lands”.¹⁷⁰ Edward and Emma's relationship is one of the examples of power struggles that happened between a king in rule and a widow queen who is mother of the same king. Because of this accumulated contradictions and opportunities between the different roles she had combined – *conlatera regis*, *regina*, *domina*, *mater regis* – Emma's powers had eclipsed beyond what it was thought acceptable. It is unclear if Emma's downfall was due to Edward's need to step aside from her shadow or if it was his court, with Godwine at its head.¹⁷¹ Emma certainly threatened Godwine, whose daughter Edith had married Edward and had no influential role at the king's side.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁶ *S* 993, *S* 994 and *S* 995

¹⁶⁷ *S* 996

¹⁶⁸ *S* 997. Here Emma is not *mater regis* but *mater regina*.

¹⁶⁹ In one occasion, Emma is enlisted before Edward's wife Edith (*Eadgifu*, in Old English). For this particular example see *S* 1000 (AD 1043)

¹⁷⁰ See for e.g. *S* 1006 and *S* 1011 (AD 1045). *S* 1012 refers to a grant made by King Edward to Old Minster and Emma does not figure in it already.

¹⁷¹ On the relationship between Emma and Edward see Chapter 4, “Genitrix”.

¹⁷² For more on Edith, see STAFFORD (2001). For the most important aspects of her life, see especially pp. 41– 48, 255 – 279.

2.2- Urraca, *Regina* and *Imperatrix*

Now let's bring our attention to our two queens in the Iberian scenario. Many definitions of power imply the ability to act on that power¹⁷³ but Urraca and Teresa felt too many times the distrust in voices who echoed the sting of the female condition, prone to eternal wickedness, voracity and transgression. The ability of a woman to exercise power was related to the man or men who were beside her. Urraca of León - Castile and Teresa of Portugal are two females claiming the right to rule on their own, that is, as reigning queens rather than regents or consorts. The two half-sisters are autonomous projections, though not independent, whose life stories reveal and intensify themselves by the occurrence of very similar motifs. Both had ambitions that went beyond the frontiers of their respective counties, and passive roles of wives, mothers or sisters of kings. Both achieved positions of power in widowhood, Urraca in 1107 and Teresa in 1112. They zealously protected the domains they thought was rightfully theirs, in an almost permanent conflict with their nobilities, with each other, and with their sons. Considerations of space and time in mind, the usage of the referring titles are still present through their careers.

The Leonese law had already accepted the transmission of hereditary rights through the female line. Blood ties were important to ensure the perpetuation of lineage and women were part of the equation to protect it. They were holders and conduits of the political capacities and jurisdiction that were entrusted to them. They could inherit and possess goods to later transmitting them to their husbands, sons, or brothers, playing an important part in the maintenance of dynastic rule¹⁷⁴ and the *memoria* of their families.

¹⁷³ On a few notions of legitimate power and authority, see STAFFORD (2001), p. 12.

¹⁷⁴ Female succession was contemplated if there were any setbacks in the line of succession to the throne. She could be heiress, owner and holder of the royal office. See "Tomo II, XV, Ley II", *Las Siete*

The two future queens started their lives as *infanta* and *reginae*, "daughters of kings",¹⁷⁵ and probably grew up together before they married Urraca to Raimundo and Teresa to Henrique.¹⁷⁶ Their status then changed. Both became *domina*, "wife", but also *dominae*, as lands and cities were given to them by their father, the king, and through marriage their husbands gave them authority and the power to charge rents. Therefore, they had the same type of sovereignty delegated by the king as male lords had. The title, for them, had a double significance.

The position of the queen consort or regent was well defined by custom and law. Queenship had been constructed as a status complementary to that of the male ruler, not powerless, but not independent either. The case of a regnant queen like Urraca was therefore anomalous. To distinguish the authority and jurisdiction of the heiress queen from the *domina*, owner of lands and people, is complicated. Urraca is, as Ángel Molina describes, "the incarnation of power, the representation of authority and *potestas*".¹⁷⁷ Her majesty resides in being both queen and king, a female body whose royal office is judicial and legitimately the same as her (male) predecessors had and her descendants shall receive. This unique situation should exclude the usage of the title *domina*. The queen is neither a king's wife, nor his or the future heir's mother. This premise could make one fall into error. Her office demands all land to belong to her; her household is the kingdom itself and all it contains.

Partidas del Rey Don Alfonso El Sabio (1807), Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, p. 133. Available in pdf format at [«http://fama2.us.es/fde/lasSietePartidasEd1807T2.pdf»](http://fama2.us.es/fde/lasSietePartidasEd1807T2.pdf)

¹⁷⁵ BLANCO (2007), Maria João, "Nobles, Eclesiásticos Y Reyes en las Cortes Leonesa Y Portuguesa: escenas de la Vida Cotidiana (1109-1157)", *Monarquía Y Sociedad en El Reino de León. De Alfonso III a Alfonso VII*, Centro de Estudios E Investigación « San Isidoro», León, Archivo Histórico Diocesano. p.742

¹⁷⁶ See Chapter 1 of this work

¹⁷⁷ See MOLINA (2006), Ángel, "Las intitulaciones y expresiones de la potestas de La Reina Urraca I de León trasfondo y significado de los vocativos «Regina» e «Imperatrix» en la primera mitad del siglo XII", *Intus-Legere Anuario de Historia*, Vol.1, Universidad Adolfo Ibañez, pp. 79-80

Yet in Urraca's case legitimacy, power and authority were not exercised or organized organically as one would expect them too. She may have had the status, and the office, which gave her the right to act and to induce obedience simply by the position she was in. But authority is not the same as power. Power is exercised, if necessary by force; authority is recognized by the community. Insofar as it was, *infanta* Urraca was Alfonso VI's only alternative to continue his lineage after the death of the heir Sancho at the Battle of Uclés in 1108. Urraca's reign was marked by the continuous evocation of her ancestry in an effort to prove her worthy of the incredible amount of power she had obtained. But to be queen and to rule were thought incompatible. The exercise of power was only correct and acceptable if the woman had a male influence that vouched for her actions.¹⁷⁸

The couple was therefore the center of the network of power with the feminine being the passive element and the masculine the active and dominant one. Yet, because the woman was wife, and thus mother of the offspring, a part of her "lord's" power passed on to her. She was *domina* in the sense of sexual partnership and because she contributed to the extension of her lord's house. In 1094, already countess of Galicia and married to Raimundo of Burgundy for one year, Urraca accompanies her husband – *totius Galletie dominus*¹⁷⁹ – to Coimbra. The future queen submitted first to her father's tutelage and then to her husband's.¹⁸⁰ Moreover, the full power of the title *domina* cannot be put into practice when it is under this sort of protection exercised by men over women which prevents them to fully access their political persona.

¹⁷⁸ MOLINA (2006), p. 82.

¹⁷⁹ *Portugaliae Monumenta Historica, Diplomata et Charter*, Vol. I- fasc.4, 1873, p. 484, doc. DCCCXIII Available online at <http://www.univ-ab.pt/bad/34/ficha_biblio.html>.

¹⁸⁰ *Portugaliae Monumenta Historica, Diplomata et Charter*, p. 484. Urraca signs as *Adefonsi imperatoris filia*, followed by *Raimundo comitis uxor*.

The correlation between title, marriage status and her sex undermines Urraca¹⁸¹ She was visible only as “the ordinary, wifely sort”,¹⁸² serving as vessel of political rights to Raimundo’s own political ambitions to succeed to the throne of León and Castile.¹⁸³ Urraca only had full expression of her office and status as *domina* of Galicia after the death of Raimundo in 1107. If she had them before, it remains concealed.

Authority and power came in two optional forms of stasis: temporal absence of a husband or permanent because the wife transitioned to widow. After 1107, Urraca transits from the position of spectator to active agent. She is now widow, “lady” of Galicia; her domain includes in addition Zamora district, and lands that stretch as far as Ávila, Salamanca and Soria.¹⁸⁴ Urraca’s first concern was to secure whatever she could under her own control. Her first diploma as *totius Galliciae domina* is issued later that year to the church of Santiago, place of Raimundo’s burial. The grant is done in the presence of all the bishops of Galicia and magnates associated with the deceased count, which suggests that the usage of *domina* was to evoke independency and not submission, a political statement for securing allies but not masters.

¹⁸¹ The face of the *domina* appears in the chronicles submitted to the role as wife and therefore annulled to a secondary position. «comes Raimunds totius Gallecie senior et dominus, partier cum consensus mee uxoris domine Urrace (...)».

¹⁸² REILLY (1999), Bernard F, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under Queen Urraca*, Princeton University Press, The Library of Iberian Resources Online, p.1. Available online in «<http://libro.uca.edu/urraca/urraca.htm>»

¹⁸³ The usage of the titles *totius Gallecie imperator*, *totius Gallecie princeps*, or *Hispaniae imperatoris domni Adefonsi gener* express his motivations. See PALLARES, PORTELA (2006), *La reina Urraca*, Nerea, p. 34.

¹⁸⁴ For Raimundo’s lands see REILLY (1999), “Chapter 1: Toward Peninsular Hegemony: León-Castile in the Eleventh Century”, pp. 8-9; The couple also had extensive holdings in the area of Sahagún, both as part of Urraca’s dowry and Raimundo’s own properties.

The complete overture formula of entitling follows as «*Ego infanta domna Urraca, Adefonsis imperatoris filia, et totius Gallecie domina*».¹⁸⁵ Firstly, the usage of *infanta* confirms her dignity of being the king's daughter and her special place in the family structure as well; secondly, *domna* carries similar connotations as “lady” in the Anglo-Saxon context, a word appropriate to describe her as member of the nobility; the remaining two denote both caution and confidence. On one hand, *domina* expresses individuality and independency – she holds her land freely from the lordship of a husband. On the other, she is still under a vertical lordship, by allegiance to her father and king. The complete statement is not only a claim of what was righteously Urraca's, but also expresses awareness of the incoming political problems and responsibilities of government.

Yet to all intents and purposes, Urraca was now a widow. Society demanded a search for a new husband. A settlement in December 1107 presided by Alfonso VI nominated Alfonso Raimúndez, heir of Galicia. However, the son of Urraca and Raimundo was still a three-year old infant. Since widows often administered properties for their minor sons until they were fit to rule, Urraca would retain control of Galicia herself. If she remarried, the government would be passed on to her son.¹⁸⁶

Widowhood status and the circumstances at the time granted her the possibility to continue to be *domina* of Galicia until the dramatic change of events brought by the death of Alfonso VI's heir, Sancho, in 1108 and the king's death in 1109. Once in the throne, Urraca's status as well as personal and political interests required the natural

¹⁸⁵ «*totius Gallecie domina*» is the title addressed to Urraca in a charter from Santiago Cathedral Archive. See MOLINA (2006) apud RECUERO (2002), M., *et. all., Documentos Medievales del Reino de Galicia: Doña Urraca (1195- 1126)* Xunta de Galicia, A. Coruña, Doc. 17 (13 de diciembre de 1107), p.7; LÓPEZ (1900), F. A., *Historia de La Santa A.M. Iglesia de Santiago de Compostela, Tomo III, Seminario Conciliar Central*, Santiago de Compostela, Doc. XXV. pp. 75-76; See also the same reference cited by REILLY (1991), p. 2

¹⁸⁶ See *Historia Compostelana*, (1994), edited by Emma Falque Rey, Ediciones Akal, Madrid, p. 153

rejection of the title of *domina*. The ceasing of its usage does not eliminate its connotations; Urraca is still *domina*, just like Emma continued to be. But the title conveyed somewhat underlined submissive and couple hierarchical connotations. Furthermore, it is not fit for a woman who is now queen-regnant. *Regina* and *imperatrix* would be the words chosen to formulate a discourse based on heritage and historical memory to affirm her divine right.

As it has been told before, titles such as *regina* describe women who ruled as wives and/or mothers, not as “feminine kings”. But if marriage and motherhood demanded a sharing of power for a queen-regent and consort and eclipsed the construction of queenship, it became somewhat problematic to a queen-regnant. It would inevitably threaten her authority. The same principle is applicable to empresses.

Urraca’s reign is attached to the notion of *Imperium* in the Kingdom of León, a concept confined to the Iberian Peninsula and to the realm of León itself, and therefore changeable to fit their realities, breaking free from ideologies or constitutions as the Carolingian or the pontifical.¹⁸⁷ The tradition of the *Imperium Legionensis* began with Fernando I and Alfonso VI, Urraca’s grandfather and father respectively. It was designed to refer the power the Hispanic king had over the Peninsula’s kings.

“Empire”, as the Romans perceived it, suggested a vindication of universal sovereignty centred in one place (Rome). It was determined by effective control over the conquered territories rather than the extension of it. Conquest and the subsequent

¹⁸⁷ The formal claiming of the regal suzerainty was made by Alfonso VI in 1079 to counteract papal claims to overlordship in León-Castile. The support of Abbot Hugh the Great and relations with Cluny seems to have helped the two parties to come to a consensus along the years, with Alfonso allowing papal pretensions just as long as Roman purposes coincided with his own, and in no ways diminished his authority over the Peninsula’s church. See REILLY (1988), Bernard F., “Chapter 6: King and Cult (1076-1080), *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VI, 1065-1109*, Princeton University Press, The Library of Iberian Resources Online, pp.104-115. Available online at <<http://libro.uca.edu/alfonso6/alfonso.htm>>

annexation implied capacity and power to exercise authority on others. That control could be formal - effective presence - or informal - ties forged based on commerce trades, ideology, conquest, or a common dynasty. For this purpose, few notions were as fundamental to roman government as *imperium*, the supreme form of power and military command.¹⁸⁸ The idea was so persuasive that it was used to describe the territory ruled by Romans - *Imperium Romanum* - and their rulers - *imperatores*. Exercising the authority of one on others as manifestation of *imperium* would transit to the medieval period and would then be used according to personal interests, both from the spiritual sphere as in the secular.¹⁸⁹

For Christianity, more thoroughly, to the Catholic Church, the use of terms as *Imperium Dei* had God as the holder and owner of an *imperium* higher than all earthly powers. Inevitably, it made Him King of kings. The Church accepted the authority of secular governments but demanded their leaders to have previous acknowledgment of the existence of a “divine right” so that, by having a bond with the religious authority, they could make use of their *imperium* on earth.¹⁹⁰ After the revived West Roman Empire of Charlemagne in the 9th century, *Imperium* was once again re-appropriated to describe the territory where the rule of one sovereignty, in the person of the *imperator*

¹⁸⁸ *Imperium* was almost exclusively used beyond the walls of Rome by an *imperator*, an army’s general. Within the city, all the magistrates and members of the roman curia were defined by their *potestas*, a civil and political power. As time went by, *imperium* started to define not only military power, but also juridical, legislative and political, encouraging a universal interpretation of *imperium* as the main source of power and authority in the roman world. The idea was so persuasive that it was used to describe the territory ruled by Romans - *Imperium Romanum* - and their rulers - *imperatores*. About the various forms of *imperium*, see DROGULA (2007), Fred K., “Imperium, Potestas, and the Pomerium in the Roman Republic”, *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, N° 56, H-4, pp. 419-452; It is important to refer that this *imperium* is almost exclusively male because of its association to the military world.

¹⁸⁹ The same division in two types of *imperium* happened during the Roman Empire, with *imperium militiae* belonging to the domain of royal power, and *imperium domi* to the magistrates. DROGULA (2007), p. 421

¹⁹⁰ Anointment and coronation ceremonies are a demonstration of that same influence and compromise.

(emperor), dominated, interconnected with *sacrum* to sustain the thesis of an *imperium christianum* – one sole ruler in heaven as in the earth. As the roman emperors since Augustus' time, the monarch held spiritual and temporal *imperium*, the command of the army and was the Church's intendant. On the other hand, the Catholic Church resorted to the *Donatio Constantini* to demonstrate that the Holy See possessed temporal *imperium* (in the person of the Pope) and spiritual, jointly.¹⁹¹

The Visigoth kingdom of Toledo notions of *imperium* did not change the same as in the rest of Europe. Words as *imperium* and continued to refer to the “divine right”, to the authority of sovereigns over servants, but seldom to military command.¹⁹² Progressively, the leonese monarchy presented itself as heir of the Catholic Visigoth Kingdom of Toledo and aspired to restore the political and religious union in Hispania. Through the virtue of empire, it would proclaim their hierarchical superiority to the remaining Christian kingdoms in the peninsula as well as their aspiration to restore the political and Christian unión of the Gothic Hispania. Thus, the imperial idea of León is born as an instrument at the service of kings, through which they could assure their position of hegemonical and undisputable power.¹⁹³ As kings, they had to fulfil their military roles as war chiefs, so they had to possess *imperium*. Strengthened through it, the title of *imperatore* began to be used not only to designate “the king of the kings of Spain” but it also reacquired the idea of the victorious military chief that once had in the roman time.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Rivalry between the two spheres of power was something that marked all the middle Ages. HEERS (1976), Jacques, *O Mundo Medieval*, translated by Pedro Moacyr, vol.2, Lisboa, Edições Ática, p. 40

¹⁹² CANDEIRA (1951), Alfonso, *El “Regnum Imperium” Leones hasta 1037*, Madrid, Talleres Gráficos EASO, pp.25-27

¹⁹³ BARTOLOMÉ BELLÓN (2014), Gabriel, “La idea imperial leonesa (ss. IX-XII)”, *Ab Initio*, N° 9, pp. 71 – 94. Available online at «www.ab-initio.es»

¹⁹⁴ BARTOLOMÉ BELLÓN (2014), p. 72

We must bear in mind that entitlements are not registered by chance, rather in tune with situations occurring in the kingdom, or in the royal offices, or due to traditions that have been developing since. When we arrive at Alfonso VI reign, the conquest of Toledo to the Almoravids ¹⁹⁵ reinforced the relation between “emperor” and the repossession of the ancient capital of the Visigoths. The imperial idea passed on primarily on the royal diplomas in the form of *intitulationes*, to rearrange the vision of Alfonso VI as total sovereign, victorious and restorer of the ancient Visigoth order. ¹⁹⁶ The king’s image was reinforced in a moment of economical and military weakness. *Imperium* becomes once more a military notion, to exalt Alfonso’s warrior skills in a time of military defeats against the Almoravides. ¹⁹⁷

As designated heir of Alfonso after the death of his male heir Sancho, Urraca wore the title of *imperatrix*, much in alignment with the ideological purposes of past decades. The adoption of such title reinforced the legitimacy of the queen and extension of her kingdom, in a particular harsh context marked by fights against the almorávides, and internal struggles, especially against Aragon and Portucale.

As Molina points out in his essay, leonese rulers are primarily kings, *rex* or *regina*, and their condition as *imperatores* do not suppress nor surpasses their regal condition. The concept of “empire” in León does not waver because the monarch chooses to be recognized simply as *rex* or *regina*. ¹⁹⁸ Alfonso VI allowed the alternation between *rex* and *imperator*, in which the emperor was considerably a king, and if the

¹⁹⁵ The Almoravids were a Berber imperial dynasty of Morocco who formed an empire in the 11th century that stretched over the western Maghreb and to the Islamic Iberia, known as al-Andalus, and came to the Peninsula in 1090. For more on the Almoravids on Iberia, see for e.g. CASTRO (2003), Francisco, “La expansión en el Magreb y al- Andalus”, *Mauritania y España, una historia común: los Almorávides, unificadores del Magreb y Al-Andalus (s.XI – XII)*, Granada, Fundación El Legado Andalusi, pp. 75 – 98.

¹⁹⁶ BARTOLOMÉ BELLÓN (2014), pp. 85- 92;

¹⁹⁷ BARTOLOMÉ BELLÓN (2014), pp. 92; p. 94 for titles

¹⁹⁸ See MOLINA (2006), pp. 84-85

king was ruler of a realm, he could legally use the title of emperor. As a result, Urraca's usage of both titles – *regina* and *imperatrix* – moved between the distinction of terms and a more frequently overlapping of dignities (*regina et imperatrix Yspanie*), in sync with the idea of *regnum-Imperium* as part of the construction of the leonese strategy and ideology, justified by the ideology that the kingdom of León was an entity overlapping all peninsula nations, realms and institutions. She is queen because she is heiress and “landlord” of León, but because this monarch, and no one else, is also in the exclusive position to exercise her rule over all the remaining kingdoms and Hispanic domains, she is also *imperatrix*.

Urraca's use of the imperial title occurs in situations where it was necessary to reaffirm her *auctoritas*, her rightful condition as heir of León in all its expressions of power, authority and jurisdiction in the Peninsula. Moreover, the use of *imperatrix* or a formula which evoked her father's title and her own lineage – “*nobilissimi impertoris Adefonsi regine filia*”,¹⁹⁹ “*filia Adefonsi imperatoris*”,²⁰⁰ “*Aldefonsi imperatoris filia*”²⁰¹ – are directly linked to royal documents in which there was a need to express territorial power by reinforcing which lands the *potestas* of the *imperium* of León could act on. Their usages are mostly applied during the time of the turbulent marriage between Urraca and Alfonso I, possibly to slow down the *Batallador's* pretences to an imperial dignity which was rightfully hers.

The intentions of Alfonso I seem clear in the «carta of arras» dating December 1109 in which he styles himself as “Adefonsus, Dei gratia totius Ispaniae imperator”. The queen is acknowledged as queen, “*regina*”, but in relation to him, as his partner, “*mea coniuge*”. For her part, Urraca states her power as of heavenly origin, “*Dei gratia*

¹⁹⁹ See ALBI (2003), Doc. 2 (September 10th), p. 356

²⁰⁰ ALBI (2003), Doc.4 (December), p. 361

²⁰¹ ALBI (2003), Doc.7 (June, 13th), p. 367

regina”, followed by a reminder of her ancestry, not Alfonso’s, in “filia Adefonsi imperatoris”. Only after does she addresses her husband, recognizing him as vessel of regal authority, “regi domino Adefonso”, but only a “domino” in her own lands.²⁰² Apparently, by marital agreement, Alfonso thought he was fully entitled to possess imperial authority by his relation to the queen.²⁰³ This falls as a reminder that although circumstances of gender and sex forced Urraca to marry again, her power was her own, sovereign, bestowed upon her by the grace of God and by right of her ancestry. After all, she was heiress to the conqueror of Toledo, not Alfonso.

The first usage of *imperatrix* is dated September 1110,²⁰⁴ a time where Urraca and Alfonso’s relations were severed.²⁰⁵ We suggest that it was part of her campaign to obtain support and to consolidate her authority against Alfonso I and other opponents in the north, during their six months of separation. In fact, the inclusion of *imperatrix* can only be observed in documents concerning granting in the northern lands and during troubled times with Alfonso I.²⁰⁶ The usage of the imperial titles does not appear in the chancery of Urraca after the divorce.

Both titles coming together might have been a strategy to form an overlapping identity though dual in its core: the *regina* states Urraca as heiress of León and monarch of that *regnum*, but because that same realm has a theoretical authority over the rest of

²⁰² ALBI (2003), doc. 16 after their reconciliation, “Dei gratie imperator (...)”;

²⁰³ ALBI (2003), doc. 4, pp. 361-362.

²⁰⁴ “*regina et imperatrix Yspaniae*” is used in a document in which the queen grants several lands and vineyards to the monastery of San Adrián de Las Palmas, in the upper Ebro. ALBI (2003), Doc. 10 (September, 6th).

²⁰⁵ The *Sahagun chronicles* tell of their fallout in Galicia, concerning an attack of the king’s forces, apparently unjustified. See ALONSO Y PUYOL (1920), pp. 36-38; Reilly points out that this occurred in early May, and that the diplomas Urraca issued in her own name as «*Yspaniae Regina*» and «*regina et Imperatrix Yspaniae*» began in June. See REILLY (1991), pp. 66-68.

²⁰⁶ Doc. 11 in Burgos, Doc. 14, in the Carreño valley, in Asturias; Reilly states that Urraca enjoyed support in Castile, León, Arroja, Trans-Duero, “Extremadura” and part of Galicia. See REILLY (1991), pp. 70-71.

the kingdoms, she is *imperatrix* of an *imperium* with its core in León. On the other hand, this identity is forged under two independent terms where one is the other and vice-versa. The figure of the *imperator* or *imperatrix* was conceived as a monarch (*rex* or *regina*) who was in the exclusive position to exercise his influence in a defined geographical space: the Iberian peninsula, hence the inclusion of “Yspaniae” in the formula.²⁰⁷

A final aspect of Urraca *imperatrix* must be brought into this discussion. The queen necessarily had *imperium* in the sense of judicial and political power over the territory, though that was easily identified as *potestas*. But did Urraca have military command? It was highly improbable (not to say impossible) for a woman to be in command of an army; that was a “man’s job”. Even so, the only but crucial difference was that Urraca was queen and king. One of the weaknesses of her sex was the inability to exercise military power and as a female, she was forbidden to do war. It was one of the reasons (perhaps even the main reason) why Alfonso VI was reluctant in bestowing the crown upon her daughter’s head unless she married, since she could not receive the royal office without receiving *imperium*, the power to control and command the army.

Contrary to the Anglo-Saxons and other cultures from Britain’s territory, who had lived with female warriors in their sagas and history,²⁰⁸ the Hispanic culture had few or none. Urraca’s charters confirm that she had control over her lands and her people, promulgating diplomas to regulate justice matters and taxes, giving lands and

²⁰⁷ See i.e. 1114, October, 28th (doc. 60) in ALBI (2003), p. 450. In this document Urraca makes use of both titles. She styles as *imperatrix* in the salutation but signs as *regina*. See also PALLARES and PORTELA (2006), pp. 106-107 for further notions on *regnum-imperium*.

²⁰⁸ Examples of these women are queen Seaxburh of Mercia, wife of King Ine (8th century) - see upper in note 39 - and Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians (10th century) – see upper in note 5. Other historical characters worth mentioning are the Celtic queens Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni, and Cartimandua, Queen of the Brigantes (1st century). Both celtic warrior chiefs are recorded in roman historian Tacitus’ *Annals* and *Agricola*, and in Dio’s *Roman History*.

conceding benefits. She had *de facto potestas* but not *imperium*. After the ultimate fallout with Alfonso I, Urraca had to reclaim all of Castile's realm.²⁰⁹ Such enterprise required military actions and campaigns against *El Batallador*. During the years of conflict with the king of Aragon, testimonies prove that Urraca at least marched "at the head of an army".²¹⁰ Could this mean that Urraca had at some point truly exercised her *imperium* on the field, that is to say, did she fight as it was expected of a king? To be more provocative, did she fight "like a man"? It seems unlikely that her group of councillors and followers allowed that extreme. Whether if it was she who was at the head of the army or men she trusted,²¹¹ the language infers that the queen was in control of her troops since they were operating in her name.

Nevertheless, it was during war times that Urraca was identified with the *persona* of supreme judge of her kingdom. Metaphorically speaking, she handled "the sword of justice", a responsibility and quality that were meant to the king. Apparently was acceptable for the queen to sometimes resort to physical violence to ensure order, tapping into the referred masculine traits that were also hers due to her status as queen-regnant and devoid of a masculine counterpart. A passage from the *Crónicas of Sahagún* portrays Urraca acting as lord – *princeps* – of a kingdom in exercising her *auctoritas*, rendering swift and sometimes brutal justice to promote or maintain peace in the realm. This is an account of a woman who resorted to virtues usually attributed to men.

²⁰⁹ Special attention was given to Toledo, a place linked to the imperial title and to Alfonso VI's conquest, the seat to the claim of ultimate suzerainty in the Peninsula. See REILLY (1991), pp. 87-88.

²¹⁰ REILLY (1991), p. 68. The *Historia Compostelana* also refers the queen marching for a military campaign against her husband; the passage gives the impression the queen was personally leading the expedition in 1112. See REY (1994), pp. 289-290, also PALLARES and PORTELA (2006), pp. 76-77.

²¹¹ Count Gómez, Count Fernando Garcia de Hita, Count Pedro Ansúrez or Pedro González de Lara to name a few. See PALLARES and PORTELA (2006), pp. 70,75, 105-106.

Courage, strength and severity, usual masculine traits, are added to her *persona* to cover her inherent feeble female existence, thus empowering her to perform the violent but necessary action. She does not do it herself but gives away the command, operating as a force of vengeance, a defender of the divine. The queen's fury was tolerable and even called for, as long as it served the narratives. After the occurrence, they are thereafter promptly removed; courage, strength and severity are replaced by gracefulness, mercy, pity and kindness, because there had been no death, only justice, or as the chronicler says: "a great kindness".²¹² A parallel with Virgin Mary as queen is here drawn; Mary is queen of Heaven and Urraca is the earthly queen, acting on her behalf, with compassion and forgiveness.²¹³

2.3 – Teresa of Portugal and her path until *Regina*

Finally, Teresa's case is very akin to Urraca's but it too poses different considerations. In all her life stages it appears that her fate was intertwined with the ambitions and twists of everyone's lives around her: Urraca's, Henrique's, the Trava's, even her son. Yet, in those same moments we cannot help but notice that she seems to operate independently, adjusting to the changing tides of the peninsula's politics in order to achieve her goals and affirm herself among them.

During hers and her sister's first married years, the appointment of Urraca as legitimate heir to the throne of León-Castile was just a farfetched hypothesis because

²¹² "(...) and then the queen ordered his [Giraldo] eyes to be taken off and him to become blind [*quedase ciego*] (...). What worthy account should I tell to the pity light for her great kindness? [*por su grand bondad?*] (...) that fortune against us (...) should be punished by the avenging divine clemency with cruel death [*punia por muerte cruel*](...) but I am happy with the consideration given by divine kindness.[*diuinal bondad*]" See ALONSO Y PUYOL (1920), pp. 90-91.

²¹³ Giraldo, a lieutenant of Alfonso I, is captured and led to the Queen's presence. Since his forces plundered Leonese lands and people without just cause, and tried to force entrance in Saint Mary's church, "queen of heaven" ("reina del cielo"), the "earthly" queen (Urraca) sentences him to be blinded. See ALONSO Y PUYOL (1920), p. 90.

their father had succeeded in legitimizing Sancho as his successor. But in 1108 he had lost his son, and his grandson Alfonso Raimúndez, Teresa's nephew, was still a three-year old infant. Suddenly Teresa's value as daughter of the king, *infanta* and *regina*, improved the changes and ambitions of her husband Henrique. To begin with, though Alfonso VI had been most favoured with women, he had his worries in leaving the throne to Urraca. According to the laws of the dynasty, Urraca's rights were undeniable, but Henrique lacked no reasons to try to get the upper hand.

Alfonso VI died around June 1109, having bestowed the kingdom on Urraca by imposing her marriage with Alfonso *El Batallador*. An eventual son from their union would inherit the kingdom of León-Castile while Alfonso Raimúndez would become king of Galicia, making any attempts or claims by the Portuguese counts extremely difficult.²¹⁴ During the first years of conflict between the two monarchs, they supported *El Batallador*. Pallares and Portela suggest that perhaps the Portuguese count was still operating under the light of the so-called "pacto sucessório", maybe trying to forge a "feminine" version of it, a veracity strategy which positively had Teresa's support.²¹⁵ That being the case or not, the counts were clearly aware of the laws of inheritance under the Visigoth law, the same circumstances which allowed Urraca herself to succeed her father in the throne. There was a slight preference for the female line in the inheritance of family property if that would preserve the lands for the family, within the

²¹⁴ Sancho appeared in royal diplomas since 1103 and was declared heir in 1107. See ESTEFÂNIO (2011), Abel, "O "pacto sucessório" revisitado: o texto e o contexto", *Medievalista* [Online], 10, p. 8. Available online at «<http://medievalista.revues.org/239>»

²¹⁵ We follow the analysis provided by MATTOSO (2007), José, *D. Afonso Henriques*, pp. 30-31 that the pact dates from 1105. The content apparently celebrates an agreement between Henrique and Raimundo in which the first recognizes the second, husband to the legitimate daughter and heir of Alfonso VI, Urraca, as the king's successor. Henrique vows to support Raimundo in due time and he in turn swear to repay his cousin with a share of the royal treasure and the kingdom. The document's authenticity and date are still discussed today among historians. See ESTEFÂNIO (2011), pp.37 – 45. See also PORTELA and PALLARES (2006), pp. 85-86.

family. In the absence of a son, a daughter or daughters could inherit. That is not to say that they could exercise the rights bequeathed to them, but could pass them on to a husband or son.²¹⁶ The birth of a male heir, Afonso Henriques, in the summer of 1109, opened the gates to new possibilities. Teresa, although illegitimate, could reclaim her right to inherit at least part of the kingdom of her father, similarly to what happened in 1065, with the division of the Kingdom of León and Castile to the sons of Fernando, the Great (*El Magno*). An eventual sharing in power between Alfonso Raimúndez and Afonso Henriques was an unknown question and a difficult one to resolve, even if the counts were victorious against their enemies. As soon as Urraca became queen, these ambitions did not cease but surely suffered a major blow.

Teresa had just as much an ambitious personality as her husband. Having been granted with the county of Portucale when she married D. Henrique, she became *domina*. Her lands consisted on all territory south the Minho River to Tagus River, including Portucale (Porto), Coimbra. Her goals where nevertheless set up higher. Documents she issued without her husband in October and December 1110 may be demonstrations of her feelings as direct holder of rights that belonged to her husband through her, because they were given by her father.²¹⁷

The couple switched their allegiance back and forth between Urraca and Alfonso I whenever suited their needs. Urraca's decision to incorporate the *plazas* of Zamora, Salamanca, Ávila, Cuenca, Olmedo, Talavera and Coria into her sister's domain was done under the highest of offices, that of the queen and her family.²¹⁸ Teresa had to

²¹⁶ For more on the subject, see DREW (1991). About inheritance laws, pp. 43-45, p. 198.

²¹⁷ See AZEVEDO (1958), Ruy, COSTA, Avelino Jesus da, *DMP - Documentos medievais Portugueses – Documentos régios*, Vol.I, Lisboa, nº 20, p. 17; nº23, p. 30.

²¹⁸ Only the two sisters are mentioned in the document. It is almost an oath, a *juramentum*, but one with a pre-determined hierarchy where Urraca is "*regina*" and Teresa is "*germana infanta domna*", second to the queen but still sharing her status as daughter of a king. See ALBI (2003), doc. 12, pp. 374-375. It is interesting to note that this document is dated c. 1110 but there is no mention of Henrique. This could

swear allegiance to Urraca, to submit to her sovereignty, and protect the lands she received against the Muslims. The queen, in return, aimed to strengthen her control over the territory. Urraca was probably unwilling to allow it and yet, the situation with Alfonso of Aragon demanded for the queen of Leon-Castille to seek allies to her cause, sometimes with major concessions. It was a most generous offer, one which amplified the Portucalense territory and gave her sister Teresa an important role in the defence of the meridian frontier.

By 1112 Count Henry was dead and Teresa assumed alone the reins of the territories. The *Historia Compostelana* points her in 1115 as “*Infantissa Terasia...Domina totius Portucale*” which suggests that *domina* encompasses “lady” as the feminine of “lord”, of the land and all that it beholds, and *infantissa* addresses her as part of the royal family. *Regina* is not used here in order perhaps not to create a conflict with Urraca’s own title.²¹⁹

Along the years, Teresa’s domain encompassed the west. Zamora, Extremadura and Portugal were in her hands. As a widow she continued to detain *potestas* but contrary to Urraca, hers had to be rectified with that dignity by her half-sister and later by her nephew (future Alfonso VII). Teresa’s next years were spent between opposing forces, amid those who desired to be completely independent from Galicia and those who wished a rapprochement of both territories separated by the Minho River. Furthermore, divergence between important religious centres (Porto and Coimbra) and

suggest that the pact of friendship was made after the Count’s death, but nothing would justify our assuming such independence of function in his wife. And yet the date must be correct, for after 1112 Urraca will never be in such precarious position again and Teresa in no position of power to exact it. On the other hand, it could have been a successful political manoeuvre of Teresa while her husband was absent from the kingdom, ensuring she received important lands while he was still alive.

²¹⁹ AMARAL (1820), António Caetano do, “Memoria V: Para a Historia da Legislação, e costumes de Portugal – 1ª época da Monarchia Portuguesa, desde o Conde D.Henrique até ao fim do reinado de d’ElRei D.Fernando” in *Memórias da Academia real das Sciencias de Lisboa, Tomo VI, Parte II*, Tipografia da Academia, Lisboa, pp 8-9. Available online at <<https://books.google.pt/books>>

some Almoravid drives into the county kept Teresa occupied. Meanwhile, Urraca was struggling with the pressures and political interests of her husband, the king of Aragon and Navarre, as well as with the Galician supporters of her son, Alfonso Raimúndez. The complexity of these circumstances, moreover, could justify why Teresa, between 1112 and 1116, had no part on the tensions that roamed her sister's court.

After 1116, we can see her more directly involved in external matters by siding with the Galician nobility led by Count Pedro de Trava against Urraca's attempts to retake Galicia. In fact, as mentioned, Teresa appears in the official charters of the county as "Queen" after 1117. This reality soon turned into a quarrel between the two sisters. Teresa's "queenly" pretensions are clear in the usage of *regina*. The *Historia Compostelana* also demarks this situation noting that Urraca "had to compete with Teresa for regina."²²⁰ Whether it was simply to stress her condition as "daughter of a king", or to level herself with Urraca, it is shown that Teresa was strongly convinced of the superiority of her birth right. Supported by the Leonese law, driven from the Visigoth's code, that all offspring, being male or female, had the right to inherit the patrimony of their fathers in equal conditions, she felt entitled to inherit at least a portion of her father's kingdom. Perhaps it was also to this principle that Teresa held on to, apart from her personal claims. As Urraca did, Teresa made her ancestry known in the diplomas and grants she issued, as queen and daughter of the "glorious emperor"²²¹ or simply "of king Afonso".²²² However, Teresa never attempted to use the title of *imperatrix*. What she could have wanted most was to share the "empire" comprised by several kingdoms with her sister, not dethrone her.

²²⁰ AMARAL (1820), p. 9

²²¹ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 335

²²² AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 339.

As a matter of fact she had a relatively small area to be ever called an empire. Urraca's and Emma's respective kingdoms had a core state and a periphery of one or more states controlled from the core – Urraca had Castile-León and Galicia, Emma had Norway and Denmark, with England at its heart. Teresa of Portucale had nothing more than ambitions and pride in her lineage. She had been sent by her father Alfonso VI to govern the county with her husband, Henry, and was indeed a representative of the Leonese jurisdiction, just as Urraca had been in Galicia when she married Raimundo. The established relationship involving the queen and the *infanta* in 1110, later between the two queens, was of mutual help and sustained dependency according to the hierarchical idea of *regina* under the *imperatrix*.

In fact, Teresa was a vassal of Urraca, based on the idea of the *regnum-Imperium*. However, the *de facto* independence of Portucale under Teresa threatened Urraca's position as heir to all her father's dominions. She was, in the end, a daughter of Alfonso VI, and could pass her right of inheritance to her son, Afonso Henriques. If something were to happen to Alfonso Raimúndez and due to lack of issue by Urraca and Alfonso I of Aragon, Teresa's son had good prospects in succeeding his aunt. Additionally, her constant queenly pretensions since 1117 threaten the whole notion of the Leonese Empire. Teresa's statement in entitling herself "queen" might proclaim that she did not recognize her half-sister as queen and heir of Alfonso VI. But there are contradictions when facing with the hypothesis of Teresa's deniability of Urraca's heritage.

Certain decisions Teresa made that transferred or created public rights under royal protection did not deny Urraca the power to legitimize them, nor it excluded the Queen's direct intervention in the territory. Some documents provide evidence of donations or confirmation of privileges in Teresa's territories that were made under the same terms as the queen of León-Castile had done, without denying the queen's

capacity and legitimate function as a supreme authority.²²³ And yet, it is undeniable that from 1117 onwards Teresa seems to operate in her own name, trying to expand her territory.

This brings us to the interesting question of military power. Had Teresa *imperium* in her lands? The constant bickering between the two sisters after 1117 is an indicator that certain ambitions were still very much in place. The privileges given to the Episcopal sees, the fixation of some monastic properties and donations to members of the secular aristocracy or the judicial help to the people of the urban centres are proof of acts of government. Teresa's actions in forging alliances and helping those who were against Urraca show her intentions clearly. Only by being in control of her territories could she have worked on establishing connections that allowed her to plot against her sister.²²⁴ In terms of military power, as *dominae* and *regina*, Teresa was in theory supreme leader of her troops. As it was said regarding Urraca, it is not known if she marched at the head of *militias* or not, leaving that to men of her circle, like the Travas, to operate in her name.

There are nevertheless accounts in which Teresa is portrayed as a “woman of arms”, one who devastates the realm that does not belong to her and rebels against the king, making use of military power to help fulfil her claims. Examples include the account of the queen's forces invading cities in southern Galicia, near the valley of the Minho, such as Tuy in 1121, and submitting them to her rule; her rule, not Urraca's. The queen of León-Castile did not fall behind and launched a military campaign against Teresa in the frontier between Portugal and Galicia.²²⁵ Another example provided by the *Historia Compostelana* during the first year of Alfonso VII's reign, although how

²²³ PORTELA and PALLARES (2006), p. 90.

²²⁴ PORTELA and PALLARES (2006), p. 88.

²²⁵ See *HC*, p. 361; REILLY (1991), p. 145.

enraptured in prejudice it may be, gives the reader a description of a woman who is “powerful in men, weapons and wealth”, attacking with armed forces the Galician frontier and “the cities and fortresses that were near Portucale”, submitting them to her power and annexing them as part of her territory.²²⁶ The same happens in 1128, in the battle of São Mamede, where apparently Teresa was present alongside Trava to submit her son, although it is most unlikely that she actually fought in the battle.²²⁷

²²⁶ *HC*, p. 469.

²²⁷ See FERNANDES (1978), pp. 94-95

Chapter 3- Image representation

Queens's pictorial images are also portrayals of women's *status* and power and another key aspect of queenship. Some difficulties arise when do not know if we are dealing with accounts of female power specifically constructed to channel and confine the feminine according to male centred ideas. However, we must not focus on such emphasis in order not to create a tendency to overlook male stereotypes in every source. Such images call for a re-interpretation of the status and function of female rulers and the interest in doing so derives partly from the new accounts of female power there depicted. The progressive construction of the Virgin Mary's queenly status can also be seen as an enhancement of queenly office. Other strategies included the evocation of tradition or the usage of mementos to act as lineage and public memory gateways. The choice of following four images can serve as example for this discussion.

Emma's most well-known images are from the frontispieces of the *Liber Vitae*, New Minster, Winchester, and of the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*. The first one, dated A.D. 1031, shows her alongside her husband Cnut; the second, c.1040, depicts her receiving the manuscript she commissioned, while her sons, Edward (future Edward, the Confessor) and Harthacnut, peep in the background at the scene. The frontispiece to the *Liber Vitae* portrays Emma and Cnut offering a gift to the church at New Minster. It is not clear whether it is a representation of a powerful woman, or of a powerless one. Emma married the Danish Conqueror Cnut, as previously discussed, whether by mutual agreement (according to the *Encomium* account)²²⁸ or by imposition of will or force²²⁹.

²²⁸ "She refused ever to become the bride of Knutr, unless he would affirm to her by oath that he would never set up the son of any wife other than herself to rule after him, if it happened that God should give her a son by him (...) Accordingly the king found what the lady said acceptable, and when the oath had been taken, the lady found the will of the king acceptable (...)" Cf. *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (1949), edited by Alistar Campbell, Camdem Third series, Vol. LXXII, London, Royal Society, p. 33.

Her increasing importance during Cnut's reign contrasts sharply with her position during Æthelred's. From 1002-16, Emma's presence is only attested in paper, as wife and mother; the title in the charters most frequently used is *conlaterana regis*, she who is at the king's side. During these years, she is most strongly gendered as a woman, as feminine, the main focus being on her marriage and childbirth, with a clear association with the princes and the idea of family. After all she was, though unlikely at that stage, a mother to a future king, hence her passive association to family politics. Further, her Danish/Norman birth proved to be ineffective to secure Norman aid and end the hostilities between the English and the Danish attackers, adding a military incapacity to her already weak gender. By contrast, Emma's importance undoubtedly grew during Cnut's reign. As wife of the defeated king, Emma was not only already queen to the English but also had a double identity, a Norman one (Emma) and an English one. Many actions were taken not merely to establish the domination of the conqueror over the conquered, but also peace and friendship between them. The marriage established peace between English and Danes too, through a woman who embodied continuity with the English past, and bore a name that linked her to a sanctified dynasty.²³⁰

The image at the *Vitae* (Image 1) can be seen as another case of a woman as pawn of men's politics, passively transacted by others. The whole image calls attention to their union. She stands on one side of an altar bearing a cross. She gestures, hand

²²⁹ See Chapter 1 of this thesis.

²³⁰ Emma was given her grandmother-in-law's name who was a near-contemporary English saintly queen. The cult of Saint Ælgifu was established at Shaftesbury soon after her death in 944. The origins firstly were primarily local, though later it continued to grow as a cult of the dynasty, and of royalty itself, spreading to Winchester by the early eleventh. She is styled as saint in the D-text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in a passage where it specifies Edgar and Eadwig's royal parentage - "Eadwig succeeded to Wessex, and his brother Edgar to Mercia: they were sons of king Edmund and St Ælgifu". Cf. ASC, MS D, s.a. 955, p.113. For an interpretation of the cult see THACKER (2001), Alan, "Dynastic Monasteries and Family Cults. Edward the Elder's sainted kindred.", *Edward the Elder, 899-924*, edition by N. J. Higham and David Hill. London, Routledge, pp. 248-63.

outstretched towards it, and her husband is directly opposite, grabbing it. She wears a fillet, symbol of a married woman, while one angel places a veil on her head, another a crown on Cnut's. By marrying to the dead king's widow, of Danish descent but more importantly an English queen, stepmother to the proclaimed Edmund, and owner of a large section of dower lands, Cnut took Emma and the kingdom followed. Emma's identity is submerged unto the symbolic name-change *Ælfgyfu* which figures in the arcing over her upper body. The title of *Regina* that accompanies the name may be nothing more than an honorific; he is *Rex*, she is *Regina*, though her primary role is that of a wife, not an equal to the king but secondary to it.²³¹

But this is a very obtuse reading of the image. Emma's connection to the Anglo-Saxon dynasty was crucial to Cnut, to embody continuity, symbolizing not only subjection, but also reconciliation and unity. The coronation and consecration in the image echoes the events of 1017, when Cnut was established as an English king, whereas Emma, an already crowned and anointed English Queen since 1002, was crowned again alongside him. Earenfight's study on Emma clearly states that the Emma from 1002 was different from that of 1017. She was fully aware of the dangers of being a king's widow and now wife of a foreign conqueror, leaving their sons in Normandy for safekeeping.²³² Similarly, Stafford calls attention to Emma's importance to Cnut beyond her *status*: she was older than the Dane, and had more knowledge and expertise in politics and in English court dynamics. This could have helped the development of a partnership between them and a share in power.²³³ In fact, surviving records and

²³¹ See STAFFORD (1997), p. 4

²³² See EARENFIGHT (2013), Theresa, "Legitimising the King's wife and bed-companion", c. 700-1100, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

²³³ See STAFFORD (2001), pp.230-231.

charters address the couple as a pair.²³⁴ Furthermore, the queen had her own influence over Cnut, and sometimes charters confirm such power.²³⁵

Emma was to Cnut more than a diplomatic prize. In the light of writings and accounts of past queens, largely inspired in Germanic and Celtic pagan traditions, with bits and pieces of Christian female models, both living and imaginative, the Anglo-Saxons developed the idea of the queen as a vessel of transition and intercession, a hybrid character with the potential to build bridges between foreign kingdoms, and join people, beliefs and social structures.²³⁶ Moreover, the gender system in the Viking age gave to women the keys to the household and to men the responsibility to take part in the realm outside the household. It was the woman who provided the man with a family and a home to return to. She gave life and rebirth, even protection, away from the chaos and dangers of the outside world. She was the keeper; he, the adventurer. A romanticized idea perhaps but backed up by the constant absences of Cnut in Scandinavia. These circumstances might have given Emma some form of regency,

²³⁴ Emma is listed immediately after Cnut in the first known charter dated 1017, granting land to Fécamp abbey. From then onwards she is listed in the witness list right after or between archbishops from 1018-19. See an example at *Diplomaticum*, p. 304 and in *S* 952 and *S* 955. From 1020 to 1033, Emma is almost ever-present in the charters, as *regina*, after the king or associated in his witness and grant, confirming the transaction. See for example *S* 957, *S* 958, *S* 960, *S* 964, *S* 967. In *S* 970 and *S* 972, from the Winchester charters, they make a grant jointly, “I, King Cnut, King of the English with my Queen Ælfgyfu confirm my gift”.

²³⁵ To abide to a request coming from the queen so early in reign and union might suggest that Emma was in fact helping Cnut secure the kingdom, with gifts and grants that would serve as payment and buy allegiance to the crown. In spite of such, Emma’s own involvement in appointing people she knew or thought of them to be important perhaps underlines her own agenda of securing English and Danish followers. See *S* 950, the sentence “Unde ego Cnut Anglorum rex venerabili archiepiscopo Ælfstano petitione coniugis ac reginæ. Ælfgyfe. quoddam silvulæ nemus concedo famosa in silva.”

²³⁶ See KLEIN (2006), Stacy S., *Ruling women – Queenship and Gender in Anglo- Saxon Literature*, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, pp. 4-5

something that was not uncommon in northern societies.²³⁷

Cnut's kingdom came to him through his marriage, thus her share in his rule. *The Liber Vitae* image can therefore evoke that partnership and not a dependent relationship. It suggests mutual support and involvement in typical patronage towards religious houses. Both monarchs are the same size, and the queen is as prominent as the king, and even larger than the saints and the celestial court. Dividing the image in half, the earthly hierarchy mirrors the heavenly. King and queen, the patrons of the abbey, are each below their saintly counter parts, Peter and Mary. Christ stands above the cross, holding a book, probably the book of life. Its *speculum*, the *Liber Vitae*, is held by the central monk. Emma is called *Aelgifu regina*, not *conlaterana* as in Æthelred's time, which makes of this new identity as much as a diminution as a new opportunity. The fillet around her brow defines her as a married woman²³⁸. A royal crown is brought from heaven to Cnut; in contrast, Emma wears a decorated band across her forehead and receives a veil. But this last piece of garment is placed on her head accompanied by the angel pointing above. This suggests that she too is consecrated – her power and status are channelled from the celestial ruler. Emma and Mary are linked visually, emphasising the queen as the earthly example of the mother and mediator of all Christians, and setting her as a role model to female contemporary audience. Their association places the queen on the right side of the cross, on the right side of Christ. Cnut holds the cross but it is his wife whom allows it. The cross could also be a symbol

²³⁷ See CLARK (1995), especially pp. 211-214. This regency, if arranged, was probably exercised alongside powerful earls like Thorkell who appears as Cnut's second in command in the *Knytlinga Saga*. It is the same person that appears in the ASC under the name of Thurkil, who accompanies the king when he travels the kingdom (i.e 1020), and to whom Cnut granted extensive lands and titles (i.e 1021), including entrusting him with the kingdom of Denmark and the protection of his own son (1023).

²³⁸ For more information on the symbolism of the fillet and variations in headdresses in Anglo-Saxon England, see CROCKER-OWEN (2004), Gale, *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, pp. 224-225.

of the Kingdom of England, a kingdom passed on to Cnut through marriage.

All it stresses Emma's importance as queen of the English and the Anglo-Saxons, but also as an office-holder and consecrated person, independent but in synchrony with her husband, the king. In 1031, Emma demonstrates the potential power of a wife and Queen: as a patron, as a parallel of Mary on earth, and as a woman who is queen, not merely a consecrated wife, and not dependent on motherhood *status* for her position.

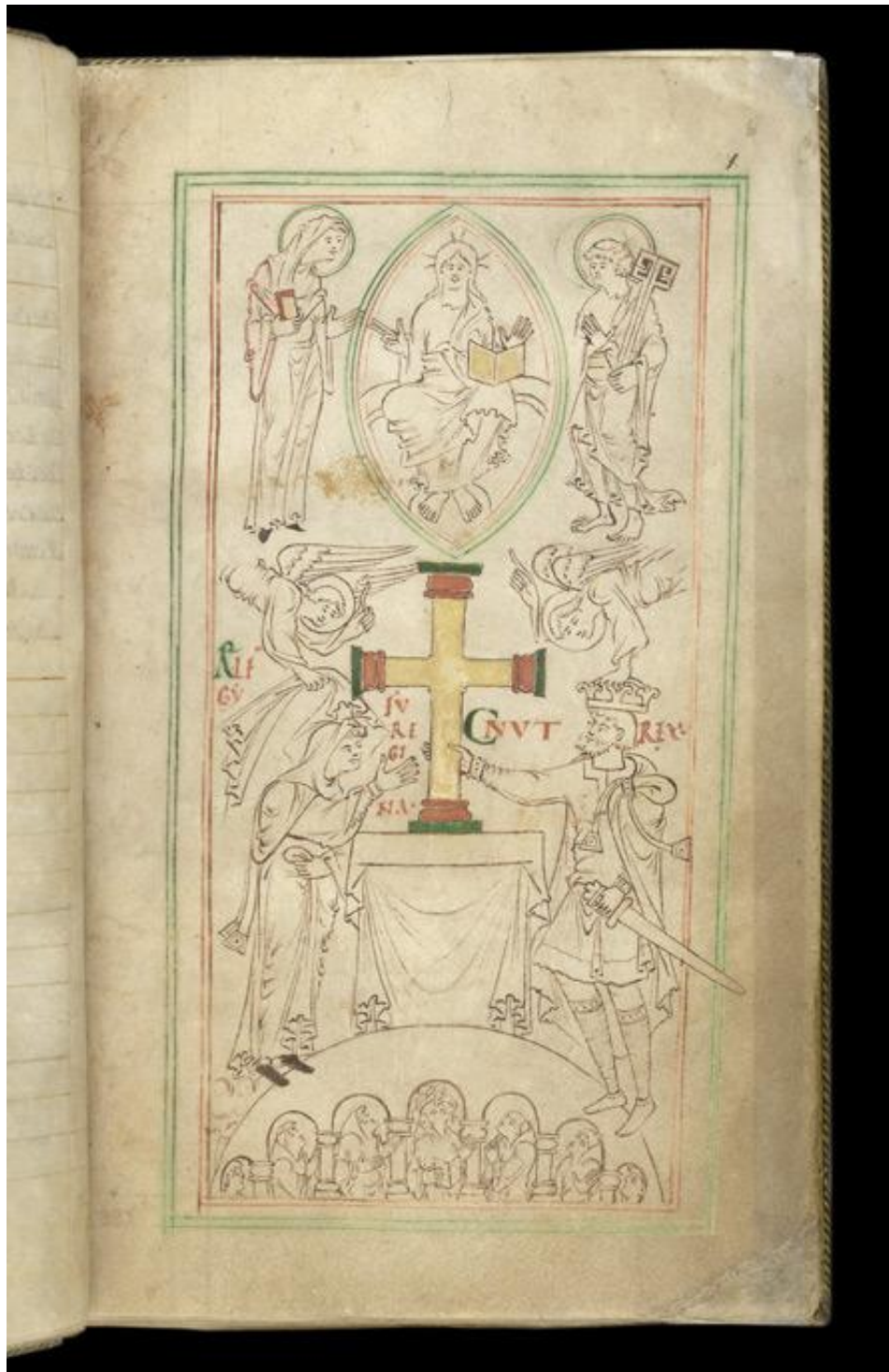


Image 1: Emma (Ælfgifu) and Cnut, from the *Liber Vitae* of New Minster Abbey, Winchester, British Library, Stowe MS 944, fol.6. (digitised manuscript from the British Library)

Image 2 is from the manuscript of the *Encomium Emmae*, a highly political work which Emma herself commissioned in 1040-1041.²³⁹ In it she tries to justify her actions as a politically active woman, sometimes even a force-user, in a time when wife and woman were to be peace-makers. And yet, albeit the gender trouble and the conflict to reconcile the two representations – the peace-maker and the force-user-, to be queen demanded struggles to retain power and position, even the use her sons to do so. On the other hand, the disputed succession between Harold Harefoot (Cnut's son from his first marriage), Edward and Alfred (Emma's sons with Æthelred) and Harthacnut (Emma's son by Cnut) also forced her children to work with her if they wanted to reclaim their inheritance.

The *Encomium* encloses an account in which personal interests and family political manoeuvres were not always peaceful nor in harmony. The Anglo-Danish court of Harthacnut in 1040-41 was far from harmonious. It was plagued with factionalism and shifting alliances between the remaining supporters of all the other candidates to the throne after Cnut's death, including Harold's and Alfred's. The invitation the unpopular king extended to his half-brother to reign jointly with him was perhaps Emma's idea to improve the fragile peace and sense of security. Moreover, it was perhaps part of a strategy to rekindle her relationship with her eldest son. Despite what the *Encomiast* says about Emma and Edward's relationship, it was one of discord, which becomes clear when he succeeded his brother and his first action was to strip his

²³⁹ The *Encomium* was written in Latin probably by a Flemish monk from Saint Berin's abbey, at Saint Omer. The manuscript – according to its own words – is a praise to Queen Emma, and was commissioned by her. The first part describes the invasion of England by Svein, Cnut's father, and his short years of government. The second focuses on Cnut's reign, his marriage to Emma, and his rule in England. The third describes Emma's position after Cnut's death and her struggles with Harold, and ends with the rule of her son Harthacnut. There are two somewhat similar versions of the *Encomium*. A third one, recently discovered, includes the rule of Edward the Confessor and was most certainly written during the Confessor's reign. See the article in <http://www.medievalhistories.com/encomium-emmae/>

mother of lands and powers.²⁴⁰

The book, however, presents a picture of a legitimate and sustainable Anglo-Danish dynasty, with a glorious past and illustrious future ahead²⁴¹. The image also conveys this idea of unity: it shows mother and sons ruling together, bound by family affection and being compared to a Trinity itself, where Harthacnut shares his kingdom with his brother, and the two of them are joined in rule by their mother.²⁴² In fact, Harthacnut is also grabbing the manuscript which is memorializing his ancestors and his own years of rule, but this detail can be easily missed because it is Emma who thoroughly dominates the page. She is twice as large as her middle-aged sons, seated on an architectural throne, and wearing jewelled robes and a large crown. Her sons remain behind, on a secondary, nearly subservient place, peering in like little children, watching the *Encomiast* presenting the text for her approval. Other than the crown placed upon Harthacnut's head to identify him as king and a simple headband on Edward's, no further details are used to differentiate both brothers.

Emma's own portrait overshadows the rest. The English queen is seen with her back straight, her eyes cast towards the manuscript being offered to her. Her gaze is fierce, confident, evoking respect and distance from the remaining figures in the image; she is at a higher level than the rest of them. One hand grasps the *Encomium* and the

²⁴⁰ See ASC, MS D, A.D.1043

²⁴¹ The work is entitled in the manuscript but it was known as *Gesta Regis Cnutonis* in the Late Middle Ages. Indeed the manuscript is an apologia to Cnut's lineage, much in the style of Epic tales as the *Aeneid*. See TYLER (2005), Elizabeth, "Talking about history in eleventh century England: the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* and the court of Harthacnut", *Early Medieval Europe*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pp. 363-364; There is still a debate going on between the German-Scandinavian scholars and the English, to assess if the manuscript is an *encomium*, a praise, to Emma, or a panegyric of Cnut. On this discussion, see JOHN'S (1980), Eric, "The *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, a Riddle and a Solution", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 63, pp. 58-94. Available online at <<https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk>> »

²⁴² *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (1949), p. 52; STRAFFORD (1997), p. 5; for more on Harthacnut's court and family dynamics in 1040-41, see TYLER (2005), pp. 359-383.

other is outstretched, palm open, in a hand shaking motion. One is not sure if she is getting hold of the manuscript or redirecting the spectator's attention towards it. This is not an image of power sharing. Emma is fronting a book in which she, powerful patroness and a *mater regis*, puts forth her own account of the eleventh-century politics. If the period from 1017 to 1035 was one of greater power and influence in her career, Emma's next years until 1040 were plagued with division, violence, factionalism and ultimately war in a hereditary dispute between her sons and stepson.

Emma had an active role in the realm, supporting financially and politically Harthacnut's claims against Harold. She pursued her most visible and active political career as a widow. She had now to protect her own power, while balancing motherhood in the context of the vulnerability of widowhood. In addition, she had to fill the role of the queen and the interests that came with it. Her role of wife had ended and she could only retain her queenship through motherhood. The *Encomium* is the zenith of this pretension; its frontispiece an echo of such. Her preference for Harthacnut may be explained by the gap of nineteen years of separation from Edward and Alfred. Although absent in Denmark when Cnut died and Harold claimed the crown, he was indeed the strongest candidate to face him.

Motherhood status was Emma's Achilles's heel but also the source of her power. Holding Winchester and the royal treasure from Harold's grasp was a bold move though one who stated the legitimacy she felt it should be in her hands; a claim of what should have gone to her son Harthacnut, or in his absence to her as a regent, as mother of the king and widow of his father. The calling she sent to Edward and Alfred in 1036, urging them to return to England and reminding them of their inheritance, must be seen as part of a series of manoeuvres to retake the throne from her stepson but also to her own protection and material interests. Without any next of kin by her side and Harold making a move on the throne immediately after his father's death, Emma's desire to

reunite with her sons became in part for them to seek support in England, but also a backup plan for herself. Should Harthacnut never return or fail to retake the throne, she needed to ensure that the crown went to her offspring.

The Anglo-Saxons followed the Germanic and Scandinavian tradition of reverence for female counsel in domestic and political affairs. A mother's ability to affect his sons' rule is present in such cultures. For instance, one cannot discard the thought on how the sagas and heroic accounts helped to develop this conviction of how important it was to have a good relationship between mother and son. According to the Icelandic sagas, the mother - usually a witch - could promote her son to other social heights, thanks to her knowledge of the world. Although this relationship normally includes supernatural elements, it portrays its mutual beneficial, with the mother using her status and abilities to help her son seek what he desires and him, in return, letting her practice her craft, especially if it is for his benefit.²⁴³

To an extent, Emma's intentions were in the best interests of her children and in the perpetuation of her bloodline, but the queen had to have her own agenda. To lose the position of queen was also to lose control of patronage, influence and lands. Similarly, Harthacnut needed his mother as his father before him: to act as council and strategist, and mediator in the social sphere, to act on her son's behalf, the king. Moreover, Emma's dower lands match Harthacnut's pattern of support. Their fates were

²⁴³ The same paradigm appears in Celtic lore, where the relationship between mother and son is sometimes between a goddess and her chosen champion. It is merely for mutual protection and interest, where the grown man still needs his mother or his female protector to council him and assists him, whether with knowledge or magical weapons. Such popular images can be put into practice. Harthacnut needed his mother for guidance and Emma needed her son to protect herself and retain her power. For more on Motherhood in Icelandic sagas, see GRUNDY (1999), Stephen, "The Viking's mother: relations between mothers and their crown sons in Icelandic Sagas", *Medieval Mothering*, edited by John Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler, New York and London, Garland Publishing Inc., pp. 223- 238. To compare with the Celtic vision on the subject, see VARANDAS (2006), Angélica, *Mitos e Lendas Celtas da Irlanda*, Lisboa, Livros e Livros; VARANDAS (2007), *Mitos e Lendas Celtas do País de Gales*.

undoubtedly bound to each other.²⁴⁴

Nonetheless, it is Emma who occupies the majority of the page; a large and prominent figure, crowned and enthroned. In mid-eleventh century, it was not even common for kings to be showed enthroned. Enthronement was something usually confined to Christ and to other heavenly beings. The throne was symbol of Wisdom, sometimes a seat to Sophia incarnated. It was also linked to the throne of Solomon. Associations with Mary may have begun around early tenth-century, following the byzantine tradition of the “Godbearer” (*Theokotos*).²⁴⁵

Portraits vary between her enthroned, alone, or with a Christ-child seated on her lap or knee or sharing a throne with the mature Christ.²⁴⁶ Titles such as “Queen Mother” have been given to her since she is the mother of Jesus, who is sometimes referred to as the “King of Kings”. Christ is the head of the institution she personifies. Appearing enthroned indicates that Mary is the bearer of the incarnated wisdom (*logos*); she is under the guise of Mary *Regina*, an intercessory with God, channel of pledge and intercession with her son in heaven. Such an interpretation can be applied to the *Encomium*’s image analysis. As Earenfight explains, in the early Middle Ages, maternity displaced sanctity as the most prominent attribute of queenship. However,

²⁴⁴ See STAFFORD (2001), pp. 243-244.

²⁴⁵ More on Mary’s title *Theotokos* and divine maternity in M’CORRY (1874), John Stewart, *Theotokos: The divine maternity*, London, Burns and Oates. Available online at [«https://archive.org/details/a591199000mcoruoft»](https://archive.org/details/a591199000mcoruoft). See also STROLL (1997), Mary, “Maria Regina: Papal Symbol”, *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*, edited by Anne Duggan, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, pp. 173-188. About the Byzantine tradition, especially pp. 175-176.

²⁴⁶ It could also vary between representations with a mature Christ obliquely on Mary’s lap, which would later give inspiration to the *Pietà*. About this subject of Mary *Theotokos* and image representation see HEARDEN (2011), Maura, KIMBALL, Virginia M., *Mary, for the love and glory of God - Essays on Mary and Ecumenism*, Bloomington, AuthorHouse. On the *Pietà*, check ZIEGLER (1995), Joanna, “Michelangelo and the Medieval *Pietà*: The Sculpture of Devotion or the Art of Sculpture?”, *Gesta*, vol. 34, n°1, pp. 28–36. Available online at [«http://www.jstor.org/stable/767122»](http://www.jstor.org/stable/767122)

sanctity remained a fundamental one for propaganda purposes.²⁴⁷ Again, the image of Mary and her guises are appropriated. Emma is the Queen Mother, the mother of the king, and intercedes and rules in his name. Therefore, though Harthacnut and Edward supposedly ruled together and shared power with Emma, the queen's prominence and power is vindicated through her motherhood. The manuscript and its frontispiece are to justify and bolster a family trinity of power. Emma depended on the claims of the male members of her family in order to give reason for and retain the power she already had. Her position needed to be justified and legitimized. An alliance with her two sons was the only move possible but because they were offspring by two husbands, it was ill-suited to the image of a faithful mother, developed for the Virgin Mary. Despite of the contradiction, she justifies herself within it, by presenting a visual and written narrative in which she negotiates and discusses with her sons in power.²⁴⁸

Mary's power and status was not completely detached from those of her son. This was a dependent relationship, one Emma and her sons understood too well. This agreement could be symbolized by the mutual grabbing of the manuscript if not by the simple inclusion of Edward and Harthacnut. Their presence, however small and somewhat prone to be seen as inferior, is needed. Like the mother of God, she is just a mere conduit, an advocate of her son or sons, of the king and future king. But just like Mary, she is the *genitrix*. Her power derives in being the bearer of the King but he would not have existed if it was not for her.

²⁴⁷ EARENIGHT (2013), p. 175-176.

²⁴⁸ STAFFORD (1993), Pauline, "Chapter 9: The Portrayal of Royal Women in England, Mid-Tenth to Mid-Twelfth Centuries", *Medieval Queenship*, edited by John Carmi Parsons, New York, St Martin's Press, pp. 163-164.



Image 2: Emma and her sons and the author of the *Encomium*, frontispiece of the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, London, British Library, Additional Ms 33241, fol.1r (digitised manuscript from the British Library)

The appropriation of Mary's enthronement motif by secular queens developed strongly in the subsequent centuries. Mary's royalty began to be more emphasized in the twelfth-century, by the usage of titles that conveyed her as sovereign and queen of the world (*domina mundi, regina, imperatrix, dominatrix*), but would very seldom appear alone. Mary's example served as a model to queens, who were expected to blend sanctity and motherhood to faster them away from sexual temptress, frailty and unwanted rumours. It is in playing the game of chess that she must thrive to succeed and gain power and status for herself. Their queenship depended heavily on the ability to coordinate these roles.

The usage of titles and the enthronement motif was certainly a powerful way to pass on a message, one who had an underlining independent authority, which certainly appealed to the queenly office. This idea is depicted in Urraca of León-Castile's full-page painting in *Tumbo A* from Cathedral of Santiago (Image 3). Kings and other characters who distinguished themselves because of their generosity towards the cathedral served as inspiration to the miniatures, Urraca amongst them. These miniatures had a pragmatic use. They served as complement to the documents preserved in the manuscript, to keep economic and jurisdictional privileges by honouring the cathedral generous donors. It is also important to refer that manuscripts such as this from the Cathedral of Santiago are designed in historical periods in which serious social and/or economical disturbances make more favourable and necessary to reaffirm the rights and domains of the institution.

At first glance, the pictorial image offers some similarities to Emma's position in the frontispiece of the *Encomium*. Urraca is also shown enthroned, with symbols that state her as sovereign. But their roles are different. Emma was queen-consort and later queen-regent; Urraca was a queen regnant. One received her power through an association with the king; the other, *a priori*, had the power to govern in her own right.

Their trouble in affirming themselves as rulers is similar, though their strategies had naturally to be distinct. Emma's stratagem took the form of the *Encomium*, preserving Cnut's memory and lineage in order to legitimize herself and her sons in the present. Thus it was necessary to portrait the manuscript being presented to her: she was receiving her source of power because she in theory had none of her own.

The association with the Virgin Mary was also part of her strategy to justify her influence and authority, as woman, as mother of the king and widow of the deceased one. Excluding the differences in time and place, Urraca had to face her own turbulent times and difficulties inherent in her unprecedented role as regnant female monarch. The actions and expectations of queens were determined by the fact that they were women. And if Emma had problems, Urraca's unique situation had brought bigger concerns as heiress and queen in her own right. To use the image of *Mary Regina* was insufficient to a queen who needed to embody the two genders – she was, after all, queen and king simultaneously.

The best strategy was to let go of her natural weakness, her womanhood. But this required a continuous "willing suspension of disbelief"²⁴⁹ – only when Urraca was successful in ceasing of being a woman could she become sovereign, and only thereafter, as Charles Garcia explains, she became *varonil*, and able to possess the masculine qualities she needed to rule.²⁵⁰ In order to access power, she was obliged to

²⁴⁹ Though the term belongs to literature (coined by English poet and philosopher Samuel Coleridge in the 19th century), the mental exercise the concept proposes is applicable when discussing a fictional or secondary reality to justify the primary. It demands the audience to be willing to overlook the obvious limitations, so that these would not interfere with the acceptance of those premises. Such premises could evoke a secondary reality, where whatever the audience experiences (reads or sees) are true. By focusing on creating a plausible and consistent fictional world, this secondary reality and belief becomes possible to accept as truthful.

²⁵⁰ See GARCIA (2006), Charles, "Le pouvoir d'une reine : L'image d'Urraque Ire (1109-1126) dans les Crónicas anónimas de Sahagún", *e-Spania*, 1st June 2006, p. 7. Available online at <http://e-spania.revues.org/319#entries>.

detach herself from her gender. Such impossibility demanded strategies to fulfil this flaw. Family memory was the most reliable. Even queens who ruled in their own right gained their position and their status in a royal family.²⁵¹ Therefore, they had a role in preserving their past in order to guarantee a reliable present and a promising future, most of the times by sponsoring writers, painters, architects, to memorize their dynasty, and in keeping good relations with the clergy, to ensure their remembrance in prayers.

Urraca's image from *Tumbo A* is an intersection of these strategies. It reveals a woman who presents herself seated in a frontal position on a throne, wearing a crown and rich robes; in her right hand, a scroll; in her left hand, a sceptre. She is presiding and reigning over her court. Her veil proves her femininity from which she cannot escape. The regalia (crown, throne and sceptre) allude to her office. If Emma's posture passed on self-assurance in her identity and the power she possesses, Urraca is not far behind. Urraca's ascension to the throne was not smooth nor her permanence there. Although medieval Castilian women could inherit directly lands and lordship from their fathers, no one wagered Urraca would inherit much less govern a realm.

Urraca's own strategy was akin to that of the English queen: legitimacy through lineage. As part of her strategy, the Queen had to use a combination of patronage and political maneuvers, as well as the evocation of family memory, more specifically, her father's memory, every so often to reaffirm her rightful place on the throne of Leon-Castile. Her position as reigning queen was enforced because her father declared her heir to the throne at his deathbed and Urraca never let that fact go forgotten. This statement and memory evocation is consequently present in the scroll Urraca's holding in *Tumbo A*. It reads "Urraca Regina Adefonsi Filia Confirmat".

The queen's body language is also inviting the reader to pay special attention to the scroll. She is tilting her head, her grasp firm on the paper she holds and a gaze

²⁵¹ See EARENIGHT (2013), p. 248.

looking directly at it, inviting whoever denies her legitimate right to rule to read her ancestry. Alfonso's name on Urraca's image reinforces her legitimacy and heritage. The maintenance of the great conqueror of Toledo's memory is present in charters dating back from 1109, "Urraca, queen of all Spains, daughter of noble lord Alfonso and Constanza" or from 1110 until her death in 1126, where Urraca's chancery continued to style her "Queen Urraca, by the grace of God Queen of all Spains, daughter of the deceased king Alfonso". One interesting fact which can makes us wonder is why the queen did not chose to also register "imperatrix" or "Adefonsi imperator" in the portrait. As previously shown in Chapter II, Urraca wore all types and variations of titles to state her undeniable superiority (*Yspanie regina, totius Yspanie Regina, Regnante domna Urraka*), including *imperatrix*, styling the leonese imperial idea. Therefore, Urraca's most common denomination of *regina* also implied the pre-existing notion and applicability of *imperatrix*.

Another important aspect worth discussing about this image is the enthronement motif. Contrary to the analysis proposed in Emma's image of the *Encomium*, the usage of the throne here has more to do with the attempt to embody both genders as well as to express authority, than with forging an association with Mary's enthronement. Firstly because these images recurrently show Mary sharing the throne with Christ, whether a mature or a child one. Urraca, unlike Emma, is not "mother and bride" to the king. She is a mother, but her son is not the heir to the throne of León, she is; she is no "bride", because although married to Alfonso I, both had the right to intervene in each other's' kingdoms, a right that was lost when their union was annulled. Secondly, although praised and venerated, she is under the guise of the intercessor, Christ's advocate on earth. Not that the queen is not also an intercessor for the people or their advocate, and in fact that was the role they were most commended for, along with the virtues of mercy and wisdom. The problem was that Urraca was not "just" a queen, but a proposed

juxtaposition of male/female, king/queen, so she had to fulfill both roles, preferably, the king's. But how could Urraca comply with the unique and apparently exclusive male trait, necessary to all kings: physical strength transposed into military *imperium*? In the context of the Reconquista, they had to be prepared for sporadic fighting or major military campaigns. To be a king in the early Middle Ages was also to be a warrior, hence the usual representation of the male ruler with a sword, as Canute in the *Liber Vitae*, and many other portraits of monarchs from other kingdoms.²⁵²

The unique Iberian context promoted strong family unity and the perpetuation of the lineage more than anything. Bloodline was *a priori* more important than a preference for a male line.²⁵³ Lineage and family rose above anything else, in order to maintain the newborn kingdoms, hence the inclusion of women as heiresses.²⁵⁴ However, to prevent entropy within an organized system where each sex and gender had their role and place defined, the confluence of *autoritas* and *potestas* needed to be avoided.²⁵⁵ Thus, Urraca could not entirely fulfil the roles she inherited without the exercise of a tutelary power. Her divorce would later give shape to a new unacceptable exercise of power. When Urraca truly began to rule alone and exercising her authority without male tutelary, legitimizing or attacking the queen's position became more

²⁵² Although it shall not be discussed in this work, it should be noted that the existence of a public and official role of the Aragonese queen as the King's lieutenant and her active role in military campaigns is another statement on the distinctiveness of the Iberian kingship and the role women had in it. See SHADIS (2006), M.T., "Women, Gender and Rulership in Romance Europe: the Iberian Case", *History Compass* 4, Blackwell Publishing, p. 485

²⁵³ "(...) in the medieval Iberian realms (...) kings prepared for their daughters' rule. They did not wait for the arrival of sons before making sure that their daughters would be accepted as heirs; the law was on their side, and the desire to maintain their lineage paramount." Cf SHADIS (2006), pp. 481- 482.

²⁵⁴ EARENIGHT (2003), pp. 160-161; PARSONS (1993), p.3; GARCIA (2006), pp. 3-4.

²⁵⁵ A sovereign territory implied that the binomy *auctoritas/potestas* was to be shared between the man (*potestas*) and the woman (*auctoritas*). See FERREIRA (2014), Maria do Rosário, "La reine est morte : la succession politique des filles de roi aux XIe et XIIe siècles", *e-Spania*, 17th of February 2014, p. 36. Available online at <http://e-spania.revues.org/23433#text>

permeant. Therefore, Urraca's enthronement on *Tumbo A* could have a more "down to earth" purpose, perhaps a mere visual strategy, «en majesté», to echo authority and strike awe and obedience in the audience, with the regalia reminding it of the law and ancestry which gave her the right to rule.



Image 3: Queen Urraca, Tumbo A, Catedral de Santiago de Compostela

Teresa of Portugal is also presented «en majesté» at the *Tumbo of Toxosoutus* in a miniature accompanying a donation dating from 1137 made to the monastery by Count Bermudo Perez and his wife, Teresa's daughter, Urraca Enriques (Image 4). Written at the end of the thirteen century at the Monastery of San Justo of Toxosoutus, the *Tumbo of Toxosoutus* is a collection of documents concerning land transactions or grants, as well as royal decrees which confirm the monastery's privileges and possessions. As in *Tumbo A* of Santiago, these diplomas are accompanied by a set of miniatures.²⁵⁶

Teresa, deceased in 1130, is remembered as queen: “qua propter ego Veremodus Petriz una cum uxore mea infante domina Vrraca Henriquiz consulis et Tharasie regina filia“. ²⁵⁷ The image itself in *folio 6v* reveals the relationship between the three characters referred in the document. With a vibrant blue background and occupying central place, Teresa mobilizes the attention. Sovereign countess and queen of Portucale, she is carrying the royal insignia: a crown with a floral motif on her head, one hand holding a scepter with an equal pattern, and the other raising an orb, symbol of her authority and dominion as an earthly ruler.

Associations with Mary are challenging in this case. Though Teresa is also under the guise of *Regina*, she, contrary to Urraca and Emma, as well as the other two characters, is seated on a bench, not a throne. Bermudo Perez Trava, her son-in-law, is represented at the queen's right side. On her left side is Urraca Henriques, daughter of Teresa and Henrique of Burgundy. Teresa's presence is justified because she is the *genitrix* of Urraca. Additionally, she is also a “king-bearer” because she is the mother of

²⁵⁶ More on *Tumbo A* and *Tumbo of Toxosoutus* see PERRÍN (2012), Ramón, “La Miniatura en Galicia en La Baja Edad Media”, *La miniatura y el grabado de la Baja Edad Media en los archivos españoles*, Coleccion Actas, Zaragoza, Instituto Fernando El Católico, pp. 103-156.

²⁵⁷ See RODRIGUEZ, Francisco, 2004, “Documentos do Tombo de Touxos Outos”, *Fontes para a Historia de Galicia*, doc.10, Santiago de Compostela, Consello da Cultura Galega, pp. 29-30

Afonso I of Portugal. Furthermore, just like her sister Urraca, her power and status derive from being the daughter of a king, Alfonso VI. Such traits were passed on to her daughter, Urraca Enriques, and through her marriage, to Bermudo and their offspring.

The presence of the *infanta* holding her own scepter, also with floral motif, has its own significance: she is taking part of the royal *status*. The differences in the scepter's heights are an open subject to interpretation, one far too delicate to start a discussion here for fear of entering the realm of pure conjecture. It could be a mere detail for the miniature embellishment or it could be statement of other sorts, given that it is Urraca's who is on the line here. Nevertheless, although Urraca is not a queen, she is daughter of one. The scepter proves her lineage and royal blood.

Family was an important social bond, and women retained claims to power and influence within. As previously stated, Urraca Enriques was a royal daughter, so her high lineage certainly established her suitability for matrimony and maternity. Additionally, she had a brother who was king. The presence of Teresa in the miniature is most probably to evoke the remembrance of that said high lineage, and the Trava's ties to it. They enjoyed an increase in wealth, authority and prestige with their relationship with the houses of León-Castile and Portugal.²⁵⁸ Bermudo's brother, Fernán Perez Trava, swore loyalty to Alfonso Raimúndez, who had been raised alongside Fernán at his father household, and supported his claims to be crowned king of Galicia in opposition to his mother. He would later become Teresa of Portugal's lover²⁵⁹ until

²⁵⁸ See MEDINA (2011), Inés Calderón, *Cum Magnatibus Regni Mei – La Nobleza y La Monarquía Leonesas durante Los Reinados de Fernando II y Alfonso IX (1157-1230)*, Biblioteca de Historia, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, p. 241

²⁵⁹ The legitimacy of the union between Queen Teresa and the Galician count Fernán Pérez de Trava is one of the most controversial questions regarding the foundation of the kingdom of Portugal. Recent studies show a tendency to devaluate the arguments from the ecclesiastic spectrum against this marriage and to accept its validity based on functional criteria. For instance, Mattoso considers that Fernán had "inherited" the prerogatives and functions of Count Henry, making quite evident and public his status as

the queen's death and enjoyed privileges in the form of titles and lands. Bermudo, on the other hand, was apparently a vassal of Queen Urraca, swearing later allegiance to Alfonso when he became king of León.²⁶⁰ In 1126 he accompanied his brother and the queen to a meeting with King Alfonso VII in Zamora²⁶¹. There is no doubt that Teresa saw these two men as good mediators to help achieve her political ends. Naturally the Trava thought the same.

The document linked to this miniature expresses Bermudo's desire, with the support of his wife Urraca, to restore a monastery which was erected by his great-grandfather "don Vermudo" and later re-erected by his grandfather "conde don Pedro", and place it under the jurisdiction of the abbot of Toxosoutos. The mention of Urraca Enriques' ancestry in the document is not only an opportunity to increasing Bermudo's prestige but also the monastery's. The transposition of that lineage to painting with the inclusion of Teresa's portrait «en majesté» links it thereafter also to royalty.

Two times a widow, Bermudo married Teresa's older daughter Urraca Henriques, a union arranged by the Portuguese queen herself and supported by his brother Fernán. He too was appointed as Teresa's lover, long before his brother, but this relationship's veracity is still passable for discussion.²⁶² Bermudo's posture in the

the queen's consort. See MATTOSO (1993), José, *História de Portugal*, vol.2 - A Monarquia feudal (1096-1480), Lisboa, Circulo de Leitores, pp. 48, 52-53; MATTOSO (2007), *D. Afonso Henriques*, pp. 30-32.

²⁶⁰ A document dating from 1118 shows Urraca, with the consent of her son, returning the territories belonging to the monastery of Sobrado to Bermudo and his brother. The two expressed their gratitude with gifts in return which suggest a normalization of relations between them. Bermudo's name appearing before Fernán's might suggest a preference, or a mere hierarchical enlistment. See ALBI (2003), doc. 95, pp. 503-505.

²⁶¹ See LIPSEY (1972), p. 55. Available online at «<http://libro.uca.edu/lipskey/chronicle.htm>»

²⁶² See MATTOSO (2007), p. 48; some theories suggest that this was a mix-up between Teresa, the queen, and Teresa, daughter of the queen and Count Henry. However, later evidences proved that Bermudo was married not to Teresa, but to Urraca. But the question about his relationship with Teresa is still debatable. See FERNANDES (1978), pp. 20 - 35

miniature of Toxosoutos seems to suggest he is in deep dialogue with the queen, while both mother and daughter have their heads turned towards him. His reputation is thus favored since he is shown as being part of a successful female royal lineage with ties to the Castilian and Leonese royalty. Matrimony is again represented as an associating instrument capable of creating wider or closer relations between coexisting family groups. The importance of female line as owners and transmitters of dynastic claims, material or immaterial, justifies Teresa's inclusion in the miniature. It is a symbolic presence, a strategy to evoke a true sense of lineage, of family power and pride. Furthermore, it was also customary for members of important households to sponsor religious houses for which they held particular esteem, whether it is one of their propriety churches or a monastery, preferably one who had previous connections with their families, in order to strengthen their local power.



Image 4: Teresa of Portugal, Bermudo Pérez and Urraca, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Tumbo de Toxosoutos, fol. 6v.

Chapter 4 - *Genitrix* of Kings: lineage, legitimacy and bloodline

It is an acceptable preposition that the image of a king is informed by the reputation of his predecessor. Commonly, kings tend to look up to the deeds and acts of lordship (or lack of them) of the former holders of the office in order to form a discourse that would enhance their own rule. Circumstances also determine a good fortune. Whether by contrast or continuity, their popularity depend on how well they counteract the appalling memory or meet up the illustrious one of the late king. These narratives of succession are usually based on the assumption that politics only involve men: a king who succeeds to another, a king who deposes an unfit ruler, a foreign king who conquers by force but is successful in legitimizing his actions and wins the love of the people, thus forging a new dynasty. But women offer an ethical-social profile rather undisputed. Their deemed weakness is also their asset – maternity. Such biological fact, rooted in the female body through birth, gives women an exclusive sex-bound role that makes them threatening to male authority. Their reproductive capacities and “labour” are source of envy and regarded with mistrust. How do they have the power over life and death through the mystery of birth?

Men are not and cannot be mothers, hence the prestige women held in ancient societies.²⁶³ Their importance as children-bearers made them vital to the continuity or establishment of lineages, some they themselves might never really be members.²⁶⁴ Stafford says “motherhood is a biological link which cannot be duplicated. Yet it is also

²⁶³ See ROMERO (2008), Rachel, *The Role of Matriarchies and patriarchies in Social Evolution vis-à-vis Bachofen and his influence on the Social Sciences*, Master thesis on Sociology, Texas A&M University, pp. 7-8. Available online at «<http://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/bitstream/handle/1969.1/85971/Romero.pdf>»

²⁶⁴ See WHEELER and PARSONS (1996), “Introduction: Medieval Mothering, Medieval Mothers”, *Medieval Mothering*, pp. 9-11.

a socially constructed role”²⁶⁵. Queens fulfilled several roles in the family. Emma, Urraca and Teresa differ on how they acquired the part, one through marriage to the king; two for being a member of his kin, with one of them being considered the legitimate heir to the throne. Therefore, when a woman was queen, she was not only a transmitter of dynastic claims, but also of royal blood, ensuring the perpetuation, establishment or legitimacy of the dynasty. She also had a role to protect and educate her offspring.²⁶⁶ As a mother, she was able to consider the well-being of all children without disregarding energies in securing the firstborn access to the throne.²⁶⁷ Their power and authority sometimes depended on how well they could maintain a good relationship with their offspring. On the other hand, their descendants occasionally affirmed their claims through the female line, whatever suited their needs best. Male relatives who might provide support just as often became centres of opposition.

It is mostly acknowledged that Harthacnut shared power and ruled the kingdom with his mother. As explained on previous chapters, she had been dominant during the brief rule of her full-age son. Emma exercised considerable power in the role she had fought for, that of mother of the king, signing as *mater regis* in the witness lists and charters, invariably placed after the king, or sometimes exercising a joint rule. The strong image of a trinity of power²⁶⁸ –Emma, Harthacnut and Edward – was probably a solution sought to bolster a slumped popularity, succumbing to factionalism and heavy taxing.²⁶⁹ But the only accounts we have of the years of 1040-1041 are those presented

²⁶⁵ STAFFORD (2001), p. 75.

²⁶⁶ RODRIGUES (2007), Ana Maria S.A., “The Queen Consort in Late-Medieval Portugal”, *Aspects of power and Authority in the Middle Ages*, edited by Brenda Bolton and Christine Meek, *International Medieval Research*, vol. 14, Turnhout, Brepols, p. 139.

²⁶⁷ WHEELER and PARSONS (1996), p. 15.

²⁶⁸ See Chapter 3 of this thesis

²⁶⁹ Harthacnut’s short reign is filled with violence and heavy taxing. As soon as he was crowned king, he imposed a severe tax to pay for his fleet, making several subjects “who had been zealous on his behalf

in the *Encomium*, where Emma chose to portray her idealized view on dynasty and lineage, to secure the continuation of her own queenship. Of Harthacnut's personal opinion about this situation we know nothing about. What we can infer is that Cnut's death and the subsequent battles fought for the throne of England made of Harthacnut's court a potentially violent place.

Bloodline and/or family were probably seen as the most reliable way of survival. For it is most strange why Emma continued to be alongside a man who was more than eighteen years old and already ruled a kingdom in his own right (Denmark). It is more difficult to interpret why Harthacnut would allow it. Strafford's view on the subject offers a plausible solution. Although queens were rarely given regency for adult kings, any regency, like succession, occurs in unique circumstances. The continuity of a form of regency, initiated in 1037²⁷⁰, for a son whose absences due to a dual kingdom made mother and son unite in interest. Moreover, the queen had not yet been supplanted by her son's marriage and the consecration of a new queen.

We should remember as well that Emma had probably acted as regent during Cnut's absences, so it was a position she should have known around well enough by then. Like his father, Harthacnut spent most of his childhood and early adulthood in Denmark, where he was sent from early age to learn and to succeed there when the time came. It is fair to suppose that he, like Cnut before him, knew nothing about England's

now became disloyal to him". See ASC, MS C, p. 160. MS E account suggests that Harthacnut was, just as Æthelred had been, "ill-advised". ASC, MS E, p. 161; The tale of Harold's body been thrown into the Thames without a proper burial contributed to the king's bad reputation as well and granted him with the animosity of Harold's party. The C Chronicler states that for these actions he "never did anything worthy of a king". - MS C, p. 162.

²⁷⁰ This is arguable, since the situation in 1035-1037, before Harold took the crown, can also be seen as an interregnum, where Emma acted as a caretaker regent and Cnut's widow, whilst the succession was settled. But in the middle of a succession dispute, neither female regency nor an interregnum was acceptable to all. ASC, MS E and D pp.189-190.

politics and laws, at least not in the practical sense. Emma could have been acting again as a teacher in the forms of government.

The narrative of the *Encomium* offers an interesting perspective on Harthacnut's preference over Edward, more than their obvious ancestry. Driven away from England, and while in exile in Flandres, Emma sent messengers to Edward, pleading her eldest son for help against Harold. It is Edward who declines saying that "the English noble had sworn no oath to him"²⁷¹ and urges his mother to reach out to Harthacnut. Emma's plight being directed first to her first son by Æthelred and not Harthacnut may be part of the *Encomium* discourse to latter justify the invitation Harthacnut made to Edward to share the kingdom with him, as a form of gratitude. Besides, according to the same manuscript, the succession was decided by an agreement between Emma and Cnut, where the queen decided to repudiate her own sons by Æthelred and declared that should the union with the conqueror be fertile their children would be sole heirs of the English throne.²⁷² Could this be the "oath" Edward was referring to?

Even so, it is unclear why Emma reached out to her eldest and not the legitimate heir. It could have been part of a strategy to show Emma working for the good of all her sons, but in the end a Danish rightful inheritance was accepted. By enhancing the claims of one son, the one who had more resources to ensure success, Emma could say she worked for them all, just as Edward's acceptance of his half-brother sovereignty is an expression of his brotherly duties mixed up with the recognition of the superiority of Harthacnut's military strength to retake the English throne by force.

²⁷¹ See *The Encomium Emmae Reginae* (1949), p. 49.

²⁷² This decision is justified by the queen's knowledge that Cnut had sons by another woman. Emma also drove her sons out of the equation to prevent opening a precedent which could allow this "illegitimate" offspring to succeed. The *Encomium* suggests she did this to protect her children from Cnut, who saw them as a threat to his conquest. Being sons of the dead king, they could gain sympathy and support, perhaps trying to regain the throne. Emma's solution sent them to a permanent exile in Normandy, but kept them alive and away from possible future misfortunes. *The Encomium Emmae Reginae* (1949) p. 33.

Harthacnut had the support necessary to restore his mother's power and take his due inheritance, but the death of Harold deprived him of showing his worth. It obviated the need for invasion, but Harthacnut returned to England at the head of a fleet. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle deems his short reign was unpopular and violent while the *Encomium* portrays Harthacnut's return as a rejoicing moment for the English nobility, who expressed their allegiance to the lawful heir to the kingdom. His relationship with his mother was too tight, where power was indeed shared or theoretically in the hands of one of them alone; sometimes an affirmative joint rule is expressed in writs where they address the subject together.²⁷³ But the court was disrupted by quarrels between supporters of Harold, Harthacnut and a fraction who was still loyal to the Anglo-Saxon dynasty, represented by Edward.

It is unknown whose idea was to bring Edward into their family rule, though it is clear that the invitation was extended in an attempt to gain the support of the Anglo-Saxon fraction and secure Emma and Harthacnut's fragile position.²⁷⁴ Furthermore, it was also to pass on the idea of a family reunited in rule, which was shared not divided. Edward was indeed granted with some sort of royal oath as king in 1041²⁷⁵ and he is present in the documentation after his mother and thirdly to his half-brother in 1042²⁷⁶. Stafford suggests that perhaps the family, with Emma at the head as *mater regis*, discussed Edward becoming regent in England whilst Harthacnut was in Denmark. She also points out that maybe Harthacnut was already ill – he would die of convulsions in June 1042 – and probably Emma, trying not to lose her queenship, resorted to Edward's return to bolster a collapsed popularity and to secure her considerable power.

²⁷³See S 997 (A.D. 1040x1042) Available online at <<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/997.html>>.

²⁷⁴See TYLER (2005), p. 301.

²⁷⁵ASC, MS C, p. 162.

²⁷⁶See e.g. S 993 (A.D. 1042) Available online at <<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/993.html>>.

Indications of Harthacnut's opinions and/or views on his mother's status and authority are sparse or none. The idea that remains is that he needed Emma as his guide and protector just as much as she was a vessel to the legitimacy of his claims. His few actions were depicted as idle, pushing him away from his father's exemplary reign and even that of Harold's. Harthacnut's increased stained reputation eventually clashed against Edward's. He was presented as a foreigner, whereas Edward was an unknown yet native prince, "nevertheless sworn as [future] king".²⁷⁷

Edward's relation with his mother after ascending to the throne began peacefully. Emma continued to exercise considerable power in court, still signing second after the king, while his wife, Edith (Eadgifu), daughter of Earl Godwine, appears in third.²⁷⁸ Documentation also shows Emma's presence as witness in charters granting privileges, especially in lands or to religious institutions where her authority and patronage were stronger.²⁷⁹ Only in 1043 did Edward move against her. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states that he may have felt aggrieved by his mother's preference for Harthacnut which would point out a reason for the invitation extended to him in 1040, as a way to try and stop the mood of suspicion and animosity between mother and oldest son.²⁸⁰ Emma was particularly keen on getting Edward on her side, perhaps to secure her position and status alongside him, just as she had been at Harthacnut's. But circumstances were different. Harthacnut died in his twenties; Edward succeeded in his late thirties. Surely he felt ready to rule alone and definitely saw his mother more as a threat and a limitation to his authority and power than an asset.

²⁷⁷ ASC, MS C (A.D. 1041).

²⁷⁸ See *S 1000* (A.D. 1043). Available online at <<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/1000.html>>.

²⁷⁹ For e.g. *S 1001* and *S 1006* granting privileges to Old Minster abbey, Winchester

²⁸⁰ See ASC, MS D, p. 163 – "She had been too strict with the king, her son, in that she had done less for him than he wished, both before his accession and afterwards."

Nothing measures Emma's power like her leaving of it. The treasure she held and controlled was a royal treasure, which Edward and his counsellors might have felt was not hers to have, but the king's. Her wealth made her the richest woman in England, with estates in the East Midlands, East Anglia and Wessex. She was attacked at Winchester by the king and earls Godwine, Leofric and Siward, deprived of untold treasures and lands. Edward's action was rash and his intent was probably to reduce Emma to a normal widowhood, after forty years as queen. Her pre-eminent position ended as soon as the king took all the lands she had into his hands.²⁸¹ He after returned to her only enough for her needs, thus turning this action into a royal granting, not personal wealth.²⁸² Reduction to the minimum rights of widowhood was an acceptable and defensible way for Edward to address the issue. She returned to court in 1044 but never again to exercise great power and disappeared from the witness lists and other sources.²⁸³

Emma's role as the *genitrix* of Edward is guided by differences of interpretation and situations. Obviously she was thought as a menace to the king's own authority as well as a threat to Godwine and his personal ambitions to gain, through his daughter Edith, married to Edward in 1042, what Emma had achieved throughout the years. Her fall in 1043 is justified through the accusations of failing to look to Edward's interests both before and after his accession. But her role as mother of kings and wife and widow of kings is not forgotten; her guises depend on the chronicles and the identities most convenient to the narratives. For example, Edward's arrival to England in 1041 is

²⁸¹ Some of these lands were granted to St. Edmunds, especially the Thingoe hundreds, in East Anglia, Suffolk. See *S 1069* and *S 1070* (A.D. 1043x1044). Available online at «<http://www.esawyer.org.uk/charter/1069.html>».

²⁸² See STAFFORD (2001), pp. 248-250.

²⁸³ STAFFORD (2001), p. 252.

recorded by the E Chronicler as the return of “the son of King Æthereld” and “the brother of King Harthacnut”. His lineage is thus tied to both royal families.

Emma’s “Normanness” is now eclipsed in the guise of “the daughter of Duke Richard”. Edward and Emma are linked through the assertion that Harthacnut and Edward are “both sons of Ælfifu”. The use of her name evokes her Englishness. At first, it is inevitable to think that there is an apparent disregard for her many identities when it is the case of a sum up in family roles and identities, royal and queenly alike, instead.²⁸⁴ On other situations her roles are chosen and recorded according to personal inclinations.²⁸⁵

The *genitrix* paradigm would be fully appropriated years to justify William the Conqueror’s invasion of England and his ties with the royal family. 1066 changed identities and retold stories. In the *Vita Aedwardi Regis (the Life of King Edward who rests at Westminster)*, a work produced in the immediate aftermath of the Norman Conquest by Edith, Edward’s wife and queen, Emma’s single appearance is as the unnamed woman who is Æthelred’s wife – “Antiqui regis Æthelredi regia conjuge” – and the carrier of the royal infant – “utero gravida, in ejus partus sobole si masculus prodirect”.²⁸⁶ Edward is again remembered as the son of King Æthelred; Cnut is thought as an illustrious ruler; Harold and Harthacnut’s reigns are ignored and Edward, the

²⁸⁴ ASC, MS E, p. 163.

²⁸⁵ Concerning Emma’s death in 1052, Chronicler D points her as “the widow of King Æthelred and King Cnut”. She is “Ælfifu Emma, the mother of King Edward and of King Harthacnut” for Chronicler E and simply “the mother of King Edward” for Chronicler F. The first two remember Emma as a symbol of the Danish and Anglo-Saxon lineages, though Chronicler D chose her role as wife and widow of kings, whereas for Chronicler E she was mother of two rulers. In contrast, Chronicler F’s account of the event suggests a preference to preserve Emma’s memory solely as Edward’s mother, with no mention of her ties to the Danish lineage. See ASC, MS E, D and F, s.a. 1052, pp. 176-177.

²⁸⁶ See “Extracts from Life of S. Edward the Confessor, in Latin and Norman French” (1858), *Lives of Edward the Confessor*, edited by Henry Richards Luard (1858), London, Longman, p. 393. Available online at <[livesedwardconf00luargoog](#)>

survivor of the old royal flock, who was since long destined to restore the Anglo-Saxon bloodline, succeeded directly to the Danish conqueror. Similarly to the *Encomium*, an oath is said to have been sworn to Edward when he was still in his mother's womb, designating him as the future king.²⁸⁷

The *genitrix* paradigm would be fully appropriated years after to justify William the Conqueror's invasion of England and his ties with the royal family. English narratives post-1066 gave Emma no central role. On the contrary, she became firmly linked to the Normans post-1066 narratives precisely because of her English background, given that she had married Æthelred and gave birth to Edward. Therefore, Emma, a Norman-born woman, poured Norman blood into the Anglo-Saxon lineage, opening a precedent for the Norman claim and acquisition of England at the hands of William the Conqueror. The fateful marriage of Æthelred and Emma had made it impossible that the politics of the duchy and the island ever again be independent of each other. It gave England a king who was half a Norman in blood, and whose ideas of government were derived from the political conditions of his mother's land.

While the English narratives portrait the Normans as oppressors, and William as a tyrant and oppressor,²⁸⁸ the contemporary Norman historians of the Conquest constructed the events and William's kingship in order to justify the bloodshed. Dennis offers a very interesting comparison between Cnut's and William's images and strategies to successfully consolidate their accession as foreign kings. Both could not

²⁸⁷ "Extracts from "Life of S. Edward the Confessor, in Latin and Norman French" (1858), pp. 393-394. Available online at «[livesedwardconf00luargoog](#)»

²⁸⁸ See e.g., ASC, MS E, s.a. 1068 "King William marched and (...) ravaged the borough, slaying many hundreds (...). King William marched into that shire [the Trent] and completely devastated it." pp. 202-203; ASC MS D, s.a. 1069 " King William came unexpectedly upon them from the south with an overwhelming host, and routed them, and then slew several hundreds of those who could not escape. He plundered the borough, and made St Peter's church an object of scorn, and also plundered and humiliated the others." p. 203.

deny that they had gained control of England by staining their hands in blood. Yet Cnut seems to have nourished better the tradition of Christian kingship to which his Anglo-Saxon predecessors belonged. His popularity ought to have been seriously undermined by his Danish background but he is rarely criticized in the chronicles and contemporary accounts; he is presented as an all-powerful ruler.²⁸⁹ His generosity towards the Church, with Emma by his side, gave his government an aura of legitimacy and helped associate his reign with the past ones.²⁹⁰

William, in turn, although not slow in using this tradition to legitimize his authority, had trouble in being accepted by his English subjects as King, possibly because many of the positions and ecclesiastical affairs started to be performed by the Norman Church, whose hierarchy received extensive estates and privileges in England, instead of granting them to English monastic houses.²⁹¹ Thus, he needed a “popular” connection to the land and its people, more than the crown that was now placed upon his head and gained through the force of a blade. Emma would fit the prerogative. But first, in order to grasp a better understanding of Emma’s importance for the Normans after 1066, we must detain ourselves on the events and motifs which led to the Battle of Hastings and William’s coronation.

The conquest of England is normally associated with a promise made by Edward to William. Leaving no offspring, he bequeathed the throne to the duke, his cousin by

²⁸⁹ For e.g., ASC, MS D, p.156 – “[1023] In this year (...) King Cnut (...) the illustrious king”.

²⁹⁰ See DENIS (2007), Chris, “Image making for the conquerors of England: Cnut and William”, *Aspects of Power and Authority in the Middle Ages*, edited by Brenda Bolton and Christine Meek, International Medieval Research, vol. 14, Turnhout, Brepols, p. 34.

²⁹¹ Attempts to justify William’s invasion are present in accounts of the first generation of Norman historians, such as in William of Jumièges’s *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, Dudo of St Quentin’s *De Moribus et Actis Primorum Normanniae Ducum*, and William of Poitiers’s *Gesta Guillelmi*. All of these works try to extol the virtues of King William, presenting him as the ideal Christian prince. DENIS (2007), pp. 34-36, 39-41

Emma's side, supposedly during William's first visit to England in 1051.²⁹² This was an argument of secondary importance but also essential to form part of the story of the Conquest. The legitimacy of the Conquest rested on the claim that Harold Godwinsson²⁹³ had committed perjury. Orderic Vitalis is particularly ill-mannered in describing the situation, accusing and insulting Harold of having betrayed the duke's trust, and forcing a decayed Edward in his deathbed to appoint him heir to the throne. He declares Harold had "usurped the English throne", deeming him as a man who committed "perjury, cruelty and other iniquities" and who led to "violent animosities between different families." Harold is mostly guilty of perjury because "Edward had bequeathed the realm to his kinsman William, announcing it (...) and afterwards by Harold himself." The Norman writer enforces the betrayal by stating that even the English had given its consent for the king to make "the duke heir to all his rights", which would make Harold a traitor as well, of his king's and people's wishes. The writer also makes a reference to Harold's oath to William being done "on the holy relics".²⁹⁴

But the very general agreement that Harold became William's man by homage was no degradation, even in the highest; a man often did homage to any one from whom he had received any great benefit, and Harold did receive it from William. It is hard to avoid the tale of Harold's visit to William. We can only say that the fact that no English writer makes any mention of any such visit, of any such oath, is, under the circumstances, the strongest proof that the story of the visit and the oath has some kind of foundation. We know as little for certain as to the circumstances of the visit or the

²⁹² See ASC, MS D, p. 176.

²⁹³ Harold was son of Godwin and brother of Edith, queen of the English and wife of Edward.

²⁹⁴ VITALIS (1853), Ordericus, *The Ecclesiastical history of England and Normandy*, Vol 1, translated by Thomas Forrester, London, Bohn, pp. 459-460. Available online at <https://archive.org/details/ecclesiasticalhi01ordeuoft>

nature of the oath. We can only say that Harold did something which enabled William to charge him with perjury and breach of the duty of a vassal. As to why he went to Normandy, there are different reports and all with a kernel of truth round which a mass of fable has gathered.²⁹⁵

Harold could at most promise William his “vote and interest,” whenever the election came. Nonetheless, no one can believe that even Harold’s influence could have obtained the crown for William. His influence in England lay in him being the embodiment of the national feeling. For Harold to appear as the supporter of William would have been to lose the crown for himself without gaining it for William. Besides, homage to a new lord did not imply treason to the old one, Edward.

The oath might, if needful, be construed very strictly, and William was disposed to construe it very strictly. Harold had not promised William a crown, which was not his to promise; he had instead promised to do that which might be held to forbid him to take a crown which William held to be his own. If the man owed his lord any duty at all, it was surely his duty not to foil his lord’s wishes in such a matter. If therefore, when the vacancy of the throne came, Harold took the crown himself, or even failed to promote

²⁹⁵ English writer William of Malmesbury tells of an “unpropitious gale” which made Harold fall accidentally into the clutches of Duke William, and proved his worth to the Normans in expeditions against the Bretons, an explanation supported by Orderic Vitalis’s own account. See MALMESBURY (1895), William of, *Chronicle of the Kings of England*, London, George Bell and Sons, p. 268. Available online at <https://archive.org/stream/williammalmesbu00willgoog#page/n289/mode/2up>; also VITALIS, (1853); The traditional Norman answer is that Harold undertook a secret mission to northern France on behalf of King Edward to promise the English throne to his heir, William, a journey which is depicted in the famous Bayeux Tapestry, and corroborated by fragments in *Vita Edwardi*. More on this subject in KEMPEN (2009), Ad Van J., “The Mercian Connection, Harold Godwineson's Ambitions, Diplomacy and Channel-Crossing, 1056-1066”, *History*, N°94, Oxford, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pp. 2-19; BROWN (2009), Jennifer, “The Bayeux Tapestry and the *Vitae* of Edward the Confessor in dialogue”, *The Bayeux Tapestry revisited*, Vol II, issue 4, Peregrinations: International Society for the Study of Pilgrimage Art, edited by John Michael Crafton, pp. 168-182. Available online at http://peregrinations.kenyon.edu/vol2_3/current.html

William's claim to it, William might argue that he had not rightly discharged the duty of a man to his lord, thus making the new king a perjured man, who had sworn an oath on relics of special holiness and had failed to help his lord, giving the conquest a character of a crusade.²⁹⁶

Edgar the Ætheling, son of Edward the Ætheling (or Edward the Exile), grandson of the famous Edward Ironside, and therefore nephew by half-blood to the Confessor, might have been the only male capable of continuing the Wessex line, but his death in 1057 ended the dream.²⁹⁷ On the other hand, his youth placed him at a fatal disadvantage. A minor facing, for example, Harold, a man of mature years and of wide experience in the government as Earl, who had ties to the royal house and had Danish royal blood from his mother's side, was most disadvantageous. Yet, even Harold's supporters could not pretend that he was a kinsman of King Edward. William could, a fact which made the very foundation of his claim and which was undoubtedly recognised by the men of the time, as giving him an advantage which could not be contradicted. Moreover, the duke's reception had been prepared for long by a group of Norman men who had followed Emma when she married Æthelred and whose descendants became thereafter under king Edward's protection.²⁹⁸

Emma's entanglement in William's claims of legitimacy arises as another argument of propaganda to enforce the conqueror's recognition as king of England in

²⁹⁶ William did fight at Hastings with a papal banner. On William's diplomacy and relations with the Holy See regarding England's issue, see DOUGLAS (1964), David, *William the Conqueror. The Norman impact upon England*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, pp. 186-188.

²⁹⁷ There are no clear indicators that Edgar's death was not from natural causes. However, this candidate's appearance in the field with the king's sanction was likely to prove fatal to any aspirations to the throne in which either William or Harold might have begun to indulge. See ASC, MS D, pp. 157-158.

²⁹⁸ DOUGLAS (1964), pp. 167-168. After his accession, Edward also gave positions of influence to his Norman friends at the English court. See FREEMAN (1991), Eric, "The Identity of Aelfgyfa in the Bayeux Tapestry", in *Annales de Normandie*, 41, année n°2, pp. 117-134. Available online at [«http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/annor_0003-4134_1991_num_41_2_1886»](http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/annor_0003-4134_1991_num_41_2_1886)

the post-Conquest period. In fact, Norman narratives post-1066, albeit not giving Emma an openly active role, furnish the basis of a passive one which make her the conduit through which Norman blood entered England, and ultimately Norman dukes. A claim through the female line proved to have been more valuable and useful to William than to Emma's own son Edward.

The distant relationship, that somewhat connected William and Edward, was thought as undoubted kinship by his supporters. In the third generation, he could claim a common ancestor to the dead king: Emma. Vitalis had already reinforced Edward's lineage when evoking Emma as mother of the Confessor. She is styled with her Norman birth name; her father's status, Edward's grandfather, is embellished, for Richard was never "king of Normandy" but duke.²⁹⁹ Emma's marriage to two kings, her motherhood of two more and her daughter's formidable match with Henry, son of Emperor Conrad II³⁰⁰, glorified the Norman line. William of Poitiers' discourse bounds Emma into the Norman case. Emma is the "genitrix filia Ricardi primi" and Æthelred the "genitor rex Anglorum".³⁰¹

The emphasis on biological birth and inheritance terms are not casually chosen. William of Poitiers traces William's genealogy to the Anglo-Saxon lineage, through Emma, the blood-mother of Edward the Confessor and Alfred. Blood is the keyword, present in the statement of *ratio sanguinis*. So if a claim by blood (*ratio sanguinis*) should ever be sought, William is the most legitimate candidate to the throne, since

²⁹⁹ DOUGLAS (1964), p. 458: "(...) the son of King Æthelred by Emma, daughter of Richard the elder, King of Normandy."

³⁰⁰ Her marriage was part of a pact between her father Cnut and Conrad II. - "Cuius etiam filiam imperator filio suo deposcens uxorem". Cf ADAMUS, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, Liber II, c.54. Available online at «<http://hbar.phys.msu.ru/gorm/chrons/bremen.htm#liber2>».

³⁰¹ See POITIER (1845), William, "Gesta Guillelmi", *Scriptores Rerum Gestarum Willelmi Conquestoris*, edited by John Allen Giles, London, Veneunt Apud D. Nutt, p. 77. Available online at «<https://archive.org/stream/scriptoresrerum00gilegoog#page/n97/mode/2up>».

Emma was his great-aunt, sister of Richard II, daughter of Richard I, the *genitrix* of King Edward.³⁰² Emma is however dubiously, presented as the origin of the Norman Conquest, the conduit through which Norman blood entered English lands and legitimizes the king-duke.³⁰³

Alfonso VII and Alfonso Henriquez relationship with their respective mothers are apparently very different from Edward and Emma's. Firstly, simply by the basic notion of differentiation in status: Urraca was queen regnant; Teresa self-proclaimed herself *regina*. Secondly, Emma never dared to rule in her own name, rather used her influence and power to obtain a "shadow" one again, this time at Harthacnut's side, but failed to do the same with Edward. The English king traced his lineage back to his father, pushing his mother to the sidewalk, for fear of a future menace, personal feelings or swayed by second opinions. Harthacnut had more to thank his mother than Edward, but still, albeit the blood which ran in their veins being Emma's as well, the two kings proclaimed themselves descendants of their respective fathers, Cnut and Æthelred, to ascend to the throne and to legitimize their right to the crown.

In contrast, and in spite of Alfonso VII's and Afonso Henriques' evocation of the memory of their male ancestors, Alfonso VI and Count Henrique, they could not escape the fact that their mothers were the reason why they later had lands to govern and crowns in their heads.³⁰⁴ Truthfully, the female nature of Urraca and Teresa became

³⁰² "Et, si ratio sanguinis poscitur, pernotum est quam proxima consanguinitate Regem Edwardum attigerit filius Ducis Rodberti, cujus amita Richardi Secundi soror, filia primi, Emma, genitrix fuit Edwardi." See POITIER (1845), p. 143.

³⁰³ STAFFORD (2001), pp.13-14, 16

³⁰⁴ Despite king in 1139, Afonso Henriques intitulation kept referring to Teresa as *regina*, envisioning a kingdom and a future title of rex. Moreover, *infans* was applicable to sons of kings, in this case, son of a queen. Ultimately, she was a conduit through which Afonso could claim a crown for himself. See GUERREIRO (2010), Maria, *Por Graça de Deus, Rei dos Portugueses: as Intitulações Régias de D. Afonso Henriques e D. Sancho I*, Dissertação de Mestrado em Estudos Medievais sobre o Poder, Universidade Aberta, pp. 77-78.

a mere accident which in nothing affects the fact that both were regarded as incarnations of political power in the territory they represent: Urraca is León-Castille, Teresa is Portucale. Nevertheless, the analysis of each case brings some interesting parallels between the three relationships into discussion.

Albeit the historical representation of these two Iberian queens being, in their essence, negative, because chroniclers had serious qualms concerning the female capacity to exercise power and authority in their own name and in their own right, they do not refute their legitimacy.³⁰⁵ And legitimacy is the key word and factor, for Alfonso VII inherited the kingdom from his mother, who had received it from her father, Alfonso VI; Afonso Henriques became heir of a tradition initiated by Teresa, where she had portrayed herself as daughter of a king, and the true beneficiary of the territories given to her by Alfonso VI. The two sisters did not occupy positions of power as a transitional stage until their sons were fit to rule. In truth, the two quarrelled with their sons, and somewhat were able to use them to fit their own goals.

Urraca, to slow the ambitions of her son Alfonso Raimúndez and of those who used him against her, associated her son to the throne, thus achieving some peace at the heart of the monarchy. Their relationship was balanced by a stumbling flow of power between the two, a “partnership” which began in 1111 with Alfonso’s coronation as King of Galicia. Pallares and Portela remind us that this coronation had been with his mother’s consent and did not threaten the legitimacy of her rule in the kingdom.³⁰⁶ As a matter of fact, the coronation was under the probation of the supreme ruler of all kingdoms, Urraca. Moreover, it guaranteed the queen support of the Galicians in her

³⁰⁵ See FERREIRA (2008), Maria do Rosário, “Urraca e Teresa: o paradigma perdido”, in *Congreso Internacional In marsupiis peregrinorum. Circulación de textos e imaxes arredor do Camiño de Santiago na Idade Media*, Santiago de Compostela, p. 13.

³⁰⁶ See PALLARES and PORTELA (2006), pp. 74-75.

struggles against Alfonso I of Aragon, at a time when an important part of her kingdom was escaping her grasp and it was vital to recover it.

In the fall of 1116, a time when Urraca's position continued to be tenuous at best, she associated her son to her rule and graced him with the titular rule of trans-Duero and Toledo. Reilly advocates that the granting of the city of Toledo in 1116 was Urraca's strategy to profit indirectly from the masculine connotations associated with the imperial title and the city of Toledo.³⁰⁷ Moreover, any gains by Alfonso Raimúndez would be at expense of the *Batallador*. Still, Urraca intended to rule there directly, and her son never used the title of *imperator* while his mother, the legitimate heir, was alive. Urraca, in turn, increased her usage of *regina Hispanie*, a formula which conveyed the unity and subordination of all the territories under her crown.³⁰⁸ She foresaw the natural appeal her son would have for the opponents of Alfonso I and how this situation could benefit her.

In fact, the connection between the youngster and the Galician party was mostly disengaged and sapped the legitimacy of their opposition against Urraca. The concession of a new dignity redounded to her benefit. Yet, Alfonso Raimúndez did not remain a passive witness forever, and Urraca had to force her hand and consent a diminution of her resources, especially after 1120 and her son's defection to the party of Count Pedro Froilaz during the crisis with Archbishop Gelmírez.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁷ "The imperial title linked to the old city of Toledo had, even more than the royal dignity, essentially masculine connotations, and so Alfonso Raimundez had a particular claim that his mother lacked." See REILLY (1999), p. 116.

³⁰⁸ See Chapter 2 of this work.

³⁰⁹ This partnership was not maintained without major concessions. Pope Callisto II threat of excommunication in 1120 pressured Urraca to renegotiate her relationship with Alfonso Raimúndez. He, in turn, proved his diplomatic and political skills when he interceded on behalf of his mother and was successful in convincing his uncle, the pope, along with Archbishop Bernard of Toledo, to forgive the queen for imprisoning the archbishop. However, this was not done due to a kindness of heart and love of a child for his mother. Urraca had to concede much of the lands in and around Sahagún to Alfonso and his

The major concessions made to satisfy Alfonso Raimúndez and his party were again part of a strategy of Urraca to maintain her throne, when she was facing an eventual deposition. This granting, along with the effective rule over Toledo, seems to have placated Alfonso's ambitions, for it appears he collaborated peacefully with the queen from 1121 until her death in 1126.³¹⁰ The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* opens with the announcement that Alfonso *el Batallador* and his supporters renewed the incursions in Castile from 1127 to 1131.³¹¹ Burgos, Carrión and Castrojeriz rebelled against the Aragonese king but were not eager to ally themselves with Alfonso VII either.³¹² At the beginning of Alfonso VII's reign, it seems that the death of Urraca created instability and a momentarily rupture of the fragile balance between the kingdom's factions, allowing the repetition of old conflicts and rivalries. Furthermore, it manifested the lack of power Urraca had over Castile.

After signing peace with the King of Aragon, Alfonso VII entered in another war against King Garcia of Navarra in Castile and Afonso Henriques in Galicia.³¹³ Apparently, the son and heir of Queen Urraca had inherited, along with the difficulties of the Castilian territory, the tensions in the west which would generate the birth of the independent kingdom of Portugal. What his mother had battled against her sister Teresa, so Alfonso VII battled against his cousin Afonso. Their storylines are also intertwined.

Galician supporters in order to renegotiate her relationship with her son and his party and forestall a possible loss of Galicia; at worst, the passage of control of the entire realm to Alfonso Raimúndez. See REILLY (1999), pp. 147-151 and 161; AMARAL and BARROCA(2012), p. 226.

³¹⁰ See REILLY (1999), p. 156; the author implies a division of the kingdom, with Urraca ruling in León and Alfonso in Toledo and trans-Duero from 1124 onwards. He also suggests that Alfonso and Galicia were effectively under the queen's control in 1123. Urraca's peace agreement with Gelmirez in March and the seizing of Count Froilaz and his sons' honours established her rule in the territory. Apparently, her son did not interfere nor manifested any dislike for his mother's actions. REILLY (1999), p.175. For the pact with Gelmirez, see ALBI (2003), pp. 563-564.

³¹¹ See LIPSKEY (1972), p. 56.

³¹² LIPSKEY (1972), pp. 54, 56-57.

³¹³ LIPSKEY (1972), pp. 91-92.

With the death of Urraca began the elaboration of images which obscured her regal functions. Alfonso VII was legitimized as being the true heir of Alfonso VI, seventeen years later, ending the reign of a woman which could have done nothing more than to adapt to the circumstances. The *Historia Compostelana* points out Alfonso VII as the one who restored order and exercised a good government. But this is a partial testimony, not one of kings, nor an official account. In truth, the *Historia Compostelana* does everything to discredit the ascension of Urraca and the king is only a shadow of the nobles and of the bishop of Compostela, the true protagonists of the account.³¹⁴

Although Alfonso VII chose to report back to his grandfather's memory, naturally due to his imperial project, there are no indications that he repudiated his mother's legacy. For example, the author of the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* reveals much enthusiasm and presents a king who reached the imperial dignity because he was chosen by God to unify the Peninsula under his rule, following the example of his ancestor, Alfonso VI, whom he was keeper and restorer of his policies. However, the imperial coronation in 1135³¹⁵ was only possible due to a series of events in which Queen Urraca played an important part.

In fact and as previously discussed, Alfonso Raimúndez was only destined to rule in Galicia, because his mother was the sole heir and successor of Alfonso VI. His exclusive access to the throne was not a pacific transition, and he was aided by his mother who, consciously or not, helped him in his *praeparatio*, including letting him rule part of the territories that were under her *potestas*. The *Chronicle* only seldom refers Urraca, but when it does she is always addressed as "Queen Urraca", which

³¹⁴ See MOLINA (2010), Ángel, "Alfonso VII, Sucesión E Imperium. El Príncipe Cristiano en La Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris y el Diplomatario Regio como modelo de virtud. Fuentes cronísticas e imagen del Soberano de León", in *Tiempo y Espacio*, núm.18: Historia, p. 2; PALLARES and PORTELA (2006), p. 186.

³¹⁵ See LIPSEKY (1972), p. 88.

conveys respect and acknowledges the status she had, thus legitimizing Alfonso as well.³¹⁶ Moreover, the chronicler justifies Alfonso VII's quarrel against Alfonso I of Aragon with the need to regain control over territories that were "taken from Queen Urraca by means of intimidation" and belonged to "Queen Urraca, his mother."³¹⁷

Albeit the lack of more evidence to elaborate further, it appears that Alfonso VII did not forget he had received his right of birth through Urraca. As a matter of fact, the queen appears as the *genitrix* of Alfonso VII in the episode against *El Batallador*, and one of the possible interpretations the chronicle wanted to offer may be that the King went into battle to restore his mother's honour and his heritage, acting as a paladin.

The idea of the *genitrix* was discussed above with Emma but it is interesting to refer that Alfonso VII also recognized Urraca as "genitrice mea" in documentation, particularly in a granting dated 1125 to the monastery of Santo Domingo of Silos, where the king styles himself as "imperator Yspanie", perhaps in a demonstration of his power in making a grant in lands belonging to Toledo's jurisdiction. The diploma also presents Urraca as "Aldefonsi regis filia", evoking the bloodline of which Alfonso came from. Son and mother grant jointly, with Urraca confirming the diploma as "Urraca regina, Genitrix eius".³¹⁸

Afonso Henriques's path and his relation with his mother are very akin to Alfonso VII. The Portuguese *infans* began as a passive witness of Teresa's actions, only entering the political scenario when he was probably twelve or thirteen years old.³¹⁹ Afonso Henriques also figures alongside his mother Teresa in charters dating from 1121

³¹⁶ "She was buried honourably (...) in the royal tombs (...) and Alfonso, the son of Queen Urraca and Count Raymond of Burgundy reigned after her with divine dispensation" –LIPSKEY (1972), pp. 52-53.

³¹⁷ LIPSKEY (1972), p. 56 and p. 61.

³¹⁸ See ALBI (2003), n°148, pp. 591-592 .

³¹⁹ These calculations are done based on the supposed year of Afonso's birth, 1109, and given the fact that he only began to confirm his mother's documents after 1121. See MATTOSO (2007), pp. 31 and 46

to 1126, probably in tune with Teresa's will to restore the former kingdom of Galicia and her alliance with the Trava family. Associating Afonso Henriques to the throne guaranteed her son's allegiance and placated the growing voices of the Portucalense nobility who did not agree with the increasing power of the Trava family.

Teresa's relationship with Fernão Peres of Trava, son of Pedro Froilaz, and her daughter's marriage, Urraca, to Bermudo of Trava, had tightened the bonds between the queen and the most powerful aristocratic family beyond the Minho River. Henceforth, the Travas had acquired enormous power and prestige. Between 1121 and 1122, the two sons of Froilaz were important characters on the Portucalense territory and were by then already part of the county lineages, and consequently, associated to the royal family. In the outcome of a possible restoration of the kingdom of Galicia, the probability of their descendants to inherit the crown was very high.

Teresa needed the Travas' support to face Urraca and making her project come true, but her actions to associate Afonso Henriques to her rule might have had more to it than just her looking out for personal interests. She might have thought of her son's rights as well, and wanted to legitimize his power and birth right, in case her union with Fernão brought male offspring and in the eventuality of a new kingdom come as well.³²⁰

The knighting of Afonso in c.1125 was probably for the same motive. The *Annales D. Afonsi Portugallensium Regis* (*The annals of King D. Afonso of Portugal*) portrait this episode as an act of rebellion of the prince against Teresa and count Trava;³²¹ Bernard Reilly is of the same opinion,³²² but we are inclined to accept the

³²⁰ See AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), pp. 220-223.

³²¹ This narrative is integrated in MATTOSO (2007), p. 54 and AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p.225 apud *Annales Domni Alfonsi Portugallensium regis*, edited by Mónica Blöcker-Walter, *Alfons I. Von Portugal*, Zürich, 1966, p. 151.

³²² The historian believes that Teresa could have done nothing more than accepting the *fait accompli* and that the knighting in Zamora, a border city, under the hand of Bishop Bernard, loyal to Urraca and

position of Mattoso, Amaral and Barroca, that Afonso's knighting ceremony was done with Teresa's consent and blessing.

Firstly, the choice of Zamora is certainly political, for it had been granted to Teresa by Urraca in 1111.³²³ If the knighting was in fact in Zamora, it could not have been done without Teresa's accord, and given her relationship with Fernão Peres de Trava, also with his consent.³²⁴ Secondly, Afonso's youth could not make him yet the leader of the Portucalense magnates who, according to the Portuguese historians, had only manifested their displeasure regarding Teresa and Trava's actions at that time, not confirming charters, suggesting a gradual separation with the affairs of the court.³²⁵ Thirdly, Alfonso Raimúndez had been knighted exactly one year earlier by Gelmirez in Santiago de Compostela, signalling the entrance of the young king into his majority and the confirmation of his claims to the throne of León-Castile.

In spite of an ongoing quarrel between Urraca and her son at the time, the ceremony was probably done by permission of the queen. Although Urraca is not present in the ceremony, the *Historia Compostelana* does not reveal the event as a rebellion, the only concern being if some gifts given to the young king should cause the queen's wrath should it ever come to her knowledge, but not the knighting itself.³²⁶ Afonso's subsequent ceremony might have had an analogous purpose, which could perhaps favour Teresa's position: Afonso secured the succession, preventing the outcome of a future dispute with an eventual offspring of Teresa and Fernão Peres of

Alfonso Raimúndez, was another way to encourage rivalry between Teresa and Afonso. See REILLY (1999) p. 193.

³²³ See Chapter 2 of this work.

³²⁴ MATTOSO (2007), p. 56; AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 225.

³²⁵ AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 226.

³²⁶ See *HC*, II, pp. 424-425.

Trava; Teresa confirmed her son's rights and in the process soothed the voices of opposition.

The Portuguese queen was deposed by her son in battle in 1128³²⁷. The accounts post-1128 emphasizes discord in the relations between Afonso and Teresa, as does the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle regarding Emma and Edward. Teresa's portrait – and Urraca's as well – remains vilified in popular culture and memory.³²⁸ The *Annales D. Afonsi Portugallensium Regis* justify São Mamede as the only action possible for a young man who had been stripped from his rights by his mother "who wished to rule with arrogance and allowed foreign and unworthy people to rule Portugal".³²⁹ It is interesting to note that English account of Edward's wrath towards his mother as soon as he was crowned explain that it was also because she had preferred another (Harthacnut) to him.

The deposition of Teresa was the culmination of a growing divergence between the interests and goals of the queen and her Galician party and the Portuguese barons, who had already secured Afonso's support and sympathy towards their cause. The death of Urraca had set things into motion and the permanent and internal political instability urged Alfonso VII to constantly seek balance. Immediately after his ascension, he tried to rapidly guarantee the loyalty of important nobles and ecclesiasts. The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* tells of a meeting in 1126 between the king's forces and Teresa and Fernão's where a conditional peace was celebrated. The incursions of Alfonso VII in Galicia and what would be the northern part of the future kingdom of Portugal one year later had the intent of ending with any threat and resistance to his authority.

³²⁷ For further knowledge on the reasons which led to the Battle of São Mamede in 1128 between Afonso Henriques and Teresa and Fernão Peres of Trava, and Teresa's downfall, see AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), pp. 228-231. An analysis and explanation for this event can be found in pp. 61-65.

³²⁸ Both queens are often represented as Jezebels. See the article of FERREIRA (2008).

³²⁹ My translation follows AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), pp. 324-325.

This campaign culminated in the siege of Guimarães. Instead of rallying forces against the Leonese hosts, Teresa and Fernão Peres of Trava withdraw and avoided battle with Alfonso VII. Such approach cost Teresa greatly, because the devastation and violence caused by the king's armies affected the domains of magnates between the Douro and the Minho River, aggravating their dislike towards the queen and the Galician count.³³⁰ We should not forget as well the rivalries on the ecclesiastical sphere, with Compostela's and Gelmirez's ambitions seeking to increase their power and crush the rights of Braga.³³¹

Afonso Henriques had proved his warrior valour in assuming the defence of the castle. Although he submitted to his cousin in the end, the *infans* demonstrated leadership skills, contrasting with his mother and the count's attitude, which had revealed a total impotence or lack of will to protect the heart of the county of Portucale.³³² The episode of Guimarães might have been the final pretext to end the years of opposition between Portucalense nobles and Galicians, which compelled the group of protesters to think of a substitution at the head of the county, through the removal of Teresa and the count Trava for the son of Count Henrique.

The role given to Afonso in the siege offers a complicate paradox. If there was an armed resistance, and if the city's defence was led by Afonso, he had to be acting in the name of the queen. On the other hand, if Afonso VII attacked to solve the problem of Teresa's submission, why did he accept the homage Afonso gave him? Mattoso and Reilly state that one of the possible explanations is that Teresa trusted her son with the protection of Guimarães and left him with the choice to accept or not to be a vassal of

³³⁰ See MATTOSO (2007) pp. 51-53; MATTOSO (1985), pp. 18-22; BRANCO (1993), Maria João, "Portugal no Reino de Leon. Etapas de uma relação (866-1179)", *El reino de León en la Alta Edad Media: La Monarquía (1109-1230)*, Vol.4, León, Arquivo Histórico Diocesano, pp. 594-595, 600-601

³³¹ For more on the subject, see Mattoso's explanation in MATTOSO (2007) pp. 39-40, 42-43, 47-50.

³³² MATTOSO (2007), pp. 227-228.

his cousin. Therefore, she did not have to commit personally and Alfonso VII had to satisfy himself with the symbolic submission of Teresa's agent.³³³

The "historical reality" is hard to come by due to the ambiguity of the data available. Nevertheless, it is subject to interpretations which may give us a picture of mother and son collaboration, instead of disagreeing with each other. Avoiding direct confrontation with her nephew might have been part of a strategy to weaken his forces, forcing him to travel a long distance in enemy lands. But what was taken from this episode was a show of weakness instead of strength and it all seemed to point out that the queen did not understand, possibly to a great extent because of her connection with Trava, that the interests and the political paths of Galicia and the county of Portucale, apart from different, were now clearly contradictory.

After the siege of Guimarães, Afonso was regarded as the perfect candidate around whom the barons could form their movement to drive out Fernão Perez de Trava.³³⁴ Afonso then began to issue diplomas and grants in his name, initiating an open quarrel with his mother.³³⁵ Regardless of how their relationship was (or at least what we could asseverate), Teresa's importance to Afonso is manifested in the documentation of the *infans* and later king. After all, he had to thank his mother for his ties to the royal family of León-Castile.

Alfonso VI's prestige was remembered by historical accounts, during and after his time, and he was recalled as the Christian sovereign by excellence. Equally to Alfonso VII, Afonso Henriques considered himself the legitimate heir of a glorious grandfather, whose memory he was obliged to honour, seeking to impersonate his deeds. The origin of such legacy was not forgotten and the first Portuguese king was

³³³ See MATTOSO (2007), p. 24.

³³⁴ See MATTOSO (2007), pp. 61-63; MATTOSO (1985), pp. 19-21

³³⁵ See attachments, "table 1" in GUERREIRO (2010), p.4

aware that he received such right through maternal transmission.³³⁶ The scribes of Count Henry and Teresa have never fail to recall her lineage, and the documentation often remembers her as “the daughter of King Alfonso” or “Emperor Afonso”.³³⁷ Afonso Henriques’s first diplomas remembered him as grandson of the same king and son of Queen Teresa. She is nearly constantly referred to as *regina*, and so far as possible, once as *matre regina*. She figures alongside his grandfather, who is *Ispanie regis* or *Ispanie imperatoris*. Count Henry is also present as Afonso’s ancestor, whose memory as a valorous knight was also an example of authority and loyalty for and whose familiar connections were not less impressive.³³⁸ Afonso is tied to them by the constant usage of vocabulary belonging to the family spectrum –*filius* and *nepos*.³³⁹

It is thought-provoking when we consider the “three duos” altogether. Emma needed Harthacnut’s support and protection to legitimize her power and status as queen mother and maintain her personal wealth. The subsequent invitation extended to Edward is done on this basis as well. Harthacnut depended on his mother’s support to help him secure the throne, with guidance over the laws of a country he had been absent since childhood and to balance the riffs of power that emerged after Cnut’s death; Edward’s re-entrance was to keep the peace between the rival parties but the invitation opened up possibilities for Emma’s oldest son to gain supporters. To share rule with him allowed Harthacnut to keep his crown and his subjects in control, Emma to continue to project a wealthy future, by trying to smooth the severed relationship she

³³⁶ See GALVÃO (1995), Duarte, *Crónica de el-rei D. Afonso Henriques de Duarte Galvão*, Lisbon, chapter 2.

³³⁷ See e.g. AMARAL and BARROCA (2012) p. 333 – “Teresa (...) daughter of the emperor of Toledo”;

³³⁸ See AMARAL and BARROCA (2012), p. 28.

³³⁹ For a full account and analysis of the titles and *formulae* in Afonso’s chancellery, see GUERREIRO (2010), particularly, attachments, table 1, pp. 3-33.

had with Edward, perhaps envisioning his eventual ascension, and Edward to forge alliances within court.

The ruling trinity of Harthacnut, Edward and Emma can be interpreted as a joining of interests and personal ambitions, but also of a fragile balance which allowed the three to be at head of the England's affairs. The death of Harthacnut disturbed such balance and set in motion opened possibilities for compelling more concentration of power at the hands of the Edwardian party. Harthacnut's disappearance caused Emma's downfall.

Edward's association to the throne also draws parallels with Alfonso Raimúndez and Afonso Henriques respective alignments with the ruling monarch. Even with roles reversed, it seems that mother and sons relied on each other to maintain or gain power, status and authority. As motherhood comprised bases of authority for a queen-regent (Emma) it became more problematic when sons inevitably threatened the authority that royal heiresses could exercise in their own right (Urraca and Teresa).³⁴⁰ Urraca often foresaw or solved problems by largely improvising responses to the conflicts between maternity and authority, in maintaining a good relationship with Alfonso Raimúndez, sometimes with greater costs.³⁴¹ Alfonso and his supporters, in turn, grew on ambitions but there is no evidence that the king openly defied his mother's rule, rather recurring to pressure and intimidation. The same can be said for Teresa who at some point might have felt the growing threat of the barons, thus allowing Afonso Henriques to confirm and distribute grants, consenting to his knighthood and later even perhaps naming him her agent, opening up the chance for him to become leader of the opposition party.

³⁴⁰ Teresa can be here considered almost as a hybrid case, for she was not a queen-regent nor regnant, but her claims were based ultimately on the second status.

³⁴¹ See ARAM (2007), Bethany, "Authority and Maternity in late – Medieval Castile: Four Queens Regnant", *Aspects of power and authority in the Middle Ages*, Edited by Brenda Bolton and Christine Meek, International Medieval Research, Vol 14, Turnhout, Brepols, pp. 121 - 129

Lastly, Alfonso, Afonso and Edward's memory became intertwined with the memory of their "bad mothers". Urraca's legitimacy is a sensitive subject and as it was said before, not denied but accepted. She was targeted as an unfit ruler, not an illegitimate one. Attacking Urraca and deposing her possibly would sign Alfonso's downfall too and could somewhat make him a usurper at the eyes of the Christendom. Despite their conflicts, personal ambitions and political stratagems, what transpires is a son who recognizes his mother as the conduit of royal blood, as his *genitrix*, and after her death, regards her as his predecessor and honours her as such. Teresa and Emma were harshly punished for favouring others rather than their direct descendants, therefore contributing to bitter relations with Afonso and Edward, and forcing their hand to retake their rightful rights by force. Afonso, however, saw opportune to maintain his mother's memory, for her lineage and legacy, whilst Edward considered his a menace; Emma would only be seen as a suitable *genitrix* for William the Conqueror's claims.

Conclusion

Women like Emma, Urraca and Teresa are more than just a gender or a sex – they are, under the guise of a queen, reflections of government, power and wisdom of a land and their people. When I started this journey, I was only certain of two things: my study needed to be related to power and its transmission and affirmation by female line, and it had to address Emma of Normandy's, a character whose life and career had been fascinating me since my undergraduate days, due to her connections to the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon lore, and her importance in building a new image of the power of a queen in eleventh-century England. Urraca and Teresa proved to be very interesting and somewhat complex characters to study as well, more than I have ever known. Both are now surrounded with new traits of understanding in my mind.

As I reach the end of a long road, I am filled with a sense of completion. Along the way of this academic work I believe I have, with due moderation, demonstrated the importance of crossing time and space to reach a broad census of historical and cultural connection between different countries. Moreover, to analyse this interaction at the light of gender studies posed a challenge liked no other I had ever had. I had to prove how power, outside circumstances and personal actions helped forming the queens' images and shaped their lives. I had to build a new historical discourse, adapt it to their life paths and to the ideas I wanted to convey in my study. Why were they different? What did they leave to history? What was their contribution to future generations of kings, starting with their own offspring? But most importantly, I was interested in finding out what could bind the three of them together. I aimed to bring them into the academic spectrum as exactly as they were – intercessory characters: queens, mothers, wives and daughters.

In the midst of all my research and as it is drawn to a close, I reaffirm that gender is, in fact, fluid. In case of these three queens, models were bent and put into question to convey new realities, their realities. The three had several different kinds of relationships with men, but none lived in their shadows nor were apparently submitted to their authority. Emma profited from a growing nine and tenth-century tradition that had already helped shaping queenship and the queen's power and status. Yet, the discourse created by the queen and her followers during her political career gave Emma the image of a powerful woman in rule, alone and alongside men, separated but in sync with her two husbands, and later her sons. Urraca's case created a clash between womanhood and manhood, forcing the society to form other discourses itself, in order to accommodate her into the "natural" order. From the three queens, she was the only one who was designated as royal heir and receiver of the throne and crown. As far as my study was concerned, Urraca serves as epitome of an attempt to reconcile female and male power, king and queen, past and present memory, society and individuality. Teresa, for her part, was effective in her strategies to try to affirm herself as ruler of her county and to assume a title that conveyed prestige and ambition and was, in her view, part of her birthright.

No matter what and how many faces and tentative roles they had or were given to them, Emma, Urraca and Teresa truthfully made an appearance on the political stage and left enough footprints to claim them as active performers of their respective time. Furthermore, the three were masters in balancing language, image and action to consolidate the exterior and interior political affairs of their kingdoms, and their own power in the royal house and family, to the point of threatening their sons and heirs with their authority. Nevertheless, it is most interesting to note that their offspring and other generations needed them for the purpose of proving lineage and bloodline, which only confirms that they had effectively sovereignty over their kingdoms.

I end this work with a written wish and a future promise. I am hoping that these reflections and investigations help others to pursue this field of study, or at least adduce curiosity for these subjects. More than evidences of my affirmations and suggestions, I would like this work to be a point of intercession, of new beginnings, a call to new voices that can regard medieval queens, lore, history, gender and imagistic as fascinating questions and worth addressing rather as trivial and dull matters to explore. We must remember that the past offers more lessons to the present than we might think of. Let this work also be another beginning in my career. If these queens should ever cross my path again, I hope I can pay them the respects they deserve, as I tried to do here and as I will always try to do with everything I put forward in my academic and personal life.

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